



# Preventing and Countering Far-Right Extremism:

European Cooperation

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COUNTRY REPORTS



## About the Project

From 2012 to 2014, the Swedish Ministry of Justice and the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) are partnering on a pan-European project aiming to enhance understanding of what works in preventing and countering far-right extremism. These reports were commissioned as part of the project to document the history, existence and varieties of far-right extremism in 10 countries (Sweden, UK, the Netherlands, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Germany, Poland, Hungary, Slovak Republic). Over the course of the two year project, the Ministry and ISD will carry out research and country visits to identify measures taken at the policy level and by civil society, and gather best practices in preventing and countering far-right extremism. The project will produce a policy recommendations report; a best practices handbook; and an e-learning tool to provide practical training for practitioners; and will seed a long-term network of experts and practitioners working to counter far-right extremism.

The project is led by **Hanga Sántha**, a jurist specialised in public international law at the Division for Democratic Issues at the Swedish Ministry of Justice, and **Vidhya Ramalingam**, a Projects Coordinator at the Institute for Strategic Dialogue.

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Cover photo: The bombed government building in Oslo, Norway, after a far-right terrorist attack on 22 July 2011.



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# FOREWORD

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In recent years, many European countries have been grimly reminded of the threat from far-right violence. Several events, such as the attacks in Oslo and Utøya, the failure to detect the National Socialist Underground in Germany, the serial killings of individuals of immigrant background in Malmö, numerous demonstrations and violent threats from members of far-right groups have fed the fear that far-right violence is on the rise. Though it is important not to exaggerate the scale of the threat, there are reasons to be concerned about how this phenomenon might develop. While the use of terrorism by far-right groups is much rarer than by other groups, a mounting wave of harassment and violent outbursts targeting asylum seekers and ethnic minorities has also presented itself in many European countries.

From 2012 to 2014, the Swedish Ministry of Justice and the Institute for Strategic Dialogue are partnering on a pan-European project to enhance understanding of what works in preventing and countering violent far-right extremism and radicalisation. This volume is a collection of papers written by leading experts across Europe which set out the history, existence and varieties of far-right extremism in the ten case study countries of the project: Sweden, UK, the Netherlands, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Germany, Poland, Hungary, and the Slovak Republic. Together, they highlight emerging trends and common challenges facing European countries which include: defining the nature of the problem and assessing threat levels

based on limited data on group membership, attendance of far right demonstrations, occurrences of hate crime and other violent incidents. The reports seek to differentiate between radical right parties, which are democratically elected and do not advocate incitement to violence, from street-based movements or individuals prepared to use violence as a legitimate means to reach ideological or political goals. They also aim to determine the relationship between democratic expressions and violent manifestations of far-right views.

This volume also demonstrates the diversity and flexibility of the European extreme right, and its international reach and impact. These movements are increasingly operating beyond country borders, whether through the development of spin-off movements like the Defence League model initiated in Britain, or through copy-cat violence, like the recent arrest in Poland of a man who allegedly had been inspired by Norwegian far-right terrorist Anders Behring Breivik to plan to bomb the Polish parliament building in Warsaw.

The challenge of far-right extremism is and should no longer be one that can be siloed in individual states' policy and civil society responses. International cooperation is needed to develop an understanding and transfer knowledge about the nature of the violence-promoting far-right environments, to ensure that best practice is exchanged between all who need it, and to create forums for peer support



among those working to prevent and tackle far-right extremism. Cross-border exchange at the European level encourages innovation, will allow us to learn faster, and means that those with less experience can learn from those with more.

There is an urgent need to address far-right extremism at the European level, and this volume is the first of a series of resources that will be developed over the course of the two-year project, including a major report with a series of policy recommendations, a best practices handbook, and an e-learning tool to provide training for practitioners. The project will furthermore seed a long-term network of experts and practitioners working to prevent and to counter far-right extremism. It is our sincere aim that this project will demonstrate the power of European cooperation and that it will improve Europe's capacity to develop successful prevention, intervention and response mechanisms.

*Hanga Sántha, Ministry of Justice, Sweden*

*Vidhya Ramalingam, Institute for Strategic Dialogue, UK*



# DENMARK

Susi Meret

## The history of right-wing extremism

Compared to other European countries, the extreme right in Denmark only has a very recent past. While the country had a Danish National Socialist Workers' Party (*Danmarks National-Socialistiske Arbejder Parti*, DNSP), founded in 1930, support for the DNSP remained very low and the party never won more than 2 per cent of the national vote and acquired only three seats in Parliament in 1943.<sup>1</sup>

The lack of direct historical continuity with past expressions of right-wing extremism can partly explain why Danish research in the field has remained sporadic. For a long time there has been a tendency among both contemporary observers and institutional authorities to presume that right-wing extremism remained relatively infrequent and was consequently not alarming. This has led to an underestimation of the actual presence of this type of ideology and violence in Denmark, and Scandinavia more broadly. It is only in recent years that Denmark has witnessed a significant increase in the number of studies looking at the phenomenon of right-wing extremism, mapping some of its core characteristics, developments and transformations in ideology, mobilisation strategies and organisational structure.<sup>2</sup> This has been followed by a strengthening of police awareness in registering extremism-motivated criminality.

Since 2009, police departments across Denmark have registered all criminality inspired by extremist ideologies, which besides racist acts (against ethnic minorities and Danes) also includes religious, political, sexual and other forms of extremism-inspired criminal activity. The available statistics from the period 2005 - 2010 (see Table 1) show for example that there was a significant increase in criminal acts throughout 2009 and 2010 (306 and 334 respectively) compared to 2008 (175). According to the PET report, this was only partly justifiable by the widened spectrum of registration.<sup>3</sup>

Table 1: Number of extremist criminal acts (2005-2010)

2005	87
2006	227
2007	35
2008	175
2009	306
2010	334

Source: Police Intelligence Service (PET), 2011<sup>4</sup>

Of the 334 cases in 2010, two thirds had been considered of unspecified character (195 out of 334). Of the remaining 139 criminal records, 62 were reported as racist (largely racism against ethnic minorities), 37 political, 30 sexual, and the remaining figures were reported as criminal acts inspired by religious extremism. Racism against minorities still



represented the largest group and the doubtful cases a category that needs further investigation.

However, in Scandinavia generally, it was particularly after the terrorist attacks in Norway on 22 July 2011 that academic researchers, politicians and security and social services became more interested in the field of right-wing extremism, as the Norwegian case had shown that the magnitude of the phenomenon cannot be considered a measure of the danger to society per se. After July 2011, the Danish Intelligence Services intensified their attention towards lone actor terrorist threats<sup>5</sup> and the specific threats from right-wing extremist milieus, while the Danish government commissioned expert reports to map the phenomenon at the regional and local levels.<sup>6</sup> The Norwegian case also demonstrated the need to study right-wing extremism beyond its traditional methods of grass-roots mobilisation and examine the far right's use of the internet and social media.

Moreover, recent developments have demonstrated the need to take a closer look at the different organisational variants and mobilisation attempts on behalf of the extreme right in Denmark. These include broader social movements that have attempted to mobilise widespread public support by means of specific socio-political frames and discourses mainly by focusing on immigration concerns and on related cultural and identity issues, and smaller subcultural milieus that have a weaker organisational structure and more extreme positions.

According to the definition given by the Danish Intelligence Service, the main feature of political extremism is its use of violent and undemocratic methods to achieve political, ideological and

religious goals.<sup>7</sup> However, there remains little understanding of the overlaps and grey-zones between extreme right groups, grass-roots movements, individuals and political radicalism (for example, “radical right parties” which operate within the framework of democracy). Some important ideological distinctions have been drawn by Ignazi between classic right-wing and the post-industrial extreme right, the former resembling autocratic-fascist and traditional right-wing groups that find their roots in National Socialism and fascism; the latter referring to a more ethnocentric extremism that is based on cultural racism, exclusionary politics and ethno-nationalism.<sup>8</sup> This typology allows us to distinguish between traditional and new forms of right-wing extremism, while also allowing us to observe its contemporary ideological transformations and recent developments. However, there is still much to be done to understand how political extremism and political radicalism may impact on one another.

The sections below will distinguish between two manifestations of right-wing extremism in Denmark: National Socialist extremism (extreme right groups clearly rejecting the democratic system and its rules); and newer anti-Islam and anti-immigration movements, largely based on ethno-nationalism and mobilisation of public opinion against minority groups (and Muslims in particular).

## The National Socialist Extreme Right

**The Danish National Socialist Movement** (*Dansk National Socialistisk Bevægelse*, DNSB) is the oldest extreme right-wing party in Denmark. The party has



ideological roots in National Socialism and is declaredly anti-democratic. Though the DNSB was launched in the 1970s, it was under the leadership of Jonni Hansen that the movement sought public visibility by holding localised demonstrations, eventually giving rise to incidences of street-level violence, particularly clashes with anti-fascist counter-movements. While the DNSB has failed to achieve significant electoral representation, attracting only 73 votes in local elections in a municipality on the outskirts of Copenhagen,<sup>9</sup> the movement's capacity for grass-roots violence is well known. Hansen, the long-time leader of the DNSB was jailed after attacking anti-fascist counter-demonstrators in 1999, and separately convicted for assaulting a police officer in 2000.<sup>10</sup>

The DNSB runs a publication, *Fædrelandet* ("Father Land") and a local radio station (Radio Oasen), in addition to maintaining a website, which brandishes a swastika. The website presents the DNSB's 12 party principles, the first of which is to "protect and strengthen the Danish people's biological and spiritual health". These principles also include more neo-nationalist concerns such as opposition to immigration, the European Union (EU), UN and NATO, and other topical concerns, such as the protection of the environment.<sup>11</sup>

Membership is open to "all genuine Danes, who want to take part in the common fight for the existence of Denmark and the white race". Members must actively contribute to the DNSB cause (there is a handbook available on the website to provide inspiration for this) and pay a membership fee of 250 DKK. The DNSB reportedly involves around 100-150 members, but the movement is reluctant to reveal exact numbers. In recent years, the DNSB has

been weakened by internal conflicts, notably among members with allegiances to Danish divisions of the violent Blood & Honour and Combat 18. The Danish division of Combat 18 has today disappeared, and Blood & Honour is a very marginal movement in the Danish context. The DNSB was weakened further by the exit of the party's long-term leader Jonni Hansen in 2011. Esben Rohde, who took over the party leadership, was not particularly liked and had been criticised for his lack of activism. Several DNSB members left the party in discontent about his leadership.

**The Danes' Party** (*Danskernes Parti*, DP) was launched in 2011 by several former members of the DNSB. Daniel Carlsen, the young and media-conscious leader of the DP, was among DNSB members who left the party following Jonni Hansen's exit. The party also includes activists from the association *Vederfølner* (see below).<sup>12</sup>

The DP promotes itself as political organisation that wants to break with traditional right-wing extremism, and the party has made an effort to modernise by removing all explicit Nazi symbols and Nazi propaganda from its programme and website. Today, the party's symbol is the Danish flag decorated with a drawing of *Yggdrasil*, the life tree from Norse mythology.

The DP claims to appeal to a larger audience than that represented by traditional right-wing nationalist extremists and to mobilise people who are dissatisfied with mainstream politics and demand more restrictive immigration measures. The party launched a campaign called "Replace the Danish People's Party with the Danes' Party", whose purpose was to acquire members from the populist right. A member of the



Danish People's Party Youth (DFU) was excluded by the party leadership for having expressed his sympathy for the DP on Facebook.

The DP programme's main aims include: the repatriation of all non-Western migrants and a halt to all immigration; Danish work for Danish workers; the withdrawal of Denmark from the EU and NATO; a safer environment and promotion of renewable energy; animal welfare; and the withdrawal of Danish soldiers from international missions (i.e. Afghanistan). The party membership list is kept secret; however, members are invited to subscribe and pay an annual fee (about 250 DKK) online.

The party is currently active in the Eastern areas of the Jutland peninsula (particularly in the cities of Aarhus and Viborg), where it holds connections with other right-wing extremist milieus. In these regions, extreme right-wing groups such as the DP, but also the Danish National Front, Vederfølner and White Pride have become more active in recent years,<sup>13</sup> and can operate relatively 'undisturbed', since the counter-mobilisation activities of anti-racist and anti-fascist groups are mainly concentrated in the Copenhagen area. To date, the DP has not been very successful, but it intends to run in the 2013 municipal elections.

**The Danish National Front** (*Danmarks Nationale Front*, DNF) is one of the largest and most important extreme right-wing groups in Denmark. The group was created by former members of the Danish Front, which officially disbanded in 2007, and had been one of the largest and best organised far-right networks from 2002 to 2007. The individuals behind the Danish Front came from extreme milieus like White

Pride and Blood & Honour, but it also had members from the parliamentary populist radical right. The Danish People's Party excluded several of its members at the local level and from the party youth, due to their close affiliation to the Danish Front.

The DNF is a racist, anti-Semitic and right-wing extremist militant group that unites both Nazis and extreme right-wing ethno-nationalists. The DNF is not a political party, but declares itself to be a "gathering of people aiming at discussing major problems beyond any specific party ideology". The DNF also remains explicitly anti-Semitic and considers the pro-Israel positions developed by some groups within the far right as opportunistic opinions that do not help the nationalist cause.

The former leader of the group, Lars Agerback, was charged for several criminal acts, including unlawful possession of weapons and chemicals for the construction of bombs.<sup>14</sup> The DNF has international contacts with several other extreme nationalist groups in Western Europe, Eastern Europe and Russia. The DNF is primarily active in the Copenhagen area, but recruits members across the country. DNF members have also been involved in violent football hooliganism.

**Vederfølner** is a far-right nationalist and anti-Muslim association, also founded in 2007 by former members of the Danish Front. Vederfølner is led by Lars Grønbæk Larsen, a known figure in the right-wing extremist milieu and son of the late Leif Larsen, former member of the Danish Progress Party. Lars Larsen is politically active; in 2011 he ran for the parliamentary elections as an independent, and gained nearly 100 votes.



Vederfølner includes members from the violent and militant far-right movement, White Pride Denmark. Since both DNF and Vederfølner were founded by what remained of the Danish Front in 2007, there are conflicts between members of both groups. Vederfølner is strongest in Aarhus and its surrounding areas, although it has also gained a foothold in peripheral areas of the Jutland peninsula and Fyn. In August 2011, Vederfølner came to the attention of the authorities in relation to the discovery of a secret right-wing extremist network called ORG, operating in the city of Aarhus, which included civil servants and entrepreneurs without former ties to far-right milieus. Interestingly, the leader of ORG, Jesper Nielsen, was a former member of the Aarhus section of the populist party, Dansk Folkeparti.

Vederfølner seeks to promote a less extreme profile and states that it consists of “worried Danes, who believe that Danish immigration policies over the last thirty years were a misfortune for the country and allowed multiculturalism, which has clashed with Danish democratic rules, freedom of speech and gender equality”. The association aims to safeguard Danish culture, national identity and democracy against what it perceives to be the Islamisation of Denmark.

## Anti-Islam Movements

Danish studies tend to link the rise and development of contemporary right-wing extremism in the country to increasing public concern about immigration over the last few decades. The social and political integration of immigrants into Western societies - particularly those of Muslim background - is considered a pressing problem by parts of the

Danish population. In Denmark, opinion polls show that the majority of the population considers Islam a threat to national security and national identity.<sup>15</sup> In this sense, and in many ways similarly to other European countries, it is hardly surprising that the extreme right is increasingly focusing on the subject of Islam in Denmark.

The harsh critique of Islam and the Muslim minority by far-right movements and milieus is a recent development. These movements consider Muslims’ cultural background, values and principles to be incompatible with those rooted in the enlightened Western and Christian world. Extreme right groups in Denmark today predominantly target the Muslim ethnic minority.

**Stop the Islamization of Denmark (SIAD)** is a single-issue movement founded in 2005 by Anders Gravers, a former member of the Danish Association, an anti-immigration organisation. At the ideological core of the movement is SIAD’s anti-Islam agenda. SIAD started by presenting its own candidate list at the municipal elections of the city of Aalborg, Northern Jutland, in 2005, where it gained around 1,300 votes. From this experience, Anders Gravers decided to start an umbrella organisation, which could operate at the national and international level. Gravers was also one of the figureheads of the group Anti-Jihad Denmark, which was founded in 2007 and brought together SIAD and other far-right groups. Due to internal conflicts, Anti-Jihad Denmark did not survive, whereas SIAD continued its activities and networking with anti-Islam group outside Danish borders. This gave rise to the network Stop the Islamization of Europe. In recent years SIAD has



come into contact with extremist anti-Jihadist groups in the US and sympathises with extreme right milieus in Israel, which is considered a bulwark against Islam and one of the last bastions of democracy in the Middle East.

SIAD's programme promotes strong neo-nationalist positions, calling for the expulsion of those who live in Denmark but "do not follow and/or respect Danish manners and customs" and an end to further immigration,<sup>16</sup> but the movement claims not to be racist. SIAD's mobilisation strategy is often based on street-level demonstrations which take place at the local, national and also international level, which attract widespread press coverage. Demonstrations have in some cases resulted in street-level violence, notably against counter-demonstrators.

**The Danish Defence League (DDL)** was established in 2010 and is the Danish offshoot of the international network initially modelled on the English Defence League (EDL). Like its sister organisations, the Danish Defence League represents a new phenomenon within right-wing extremism, and focuses on the question of Islam and on the 'culture clash' between the Western Christian Judaic civilization and culture, considered the carrier of progressive, open and tolerant values such as democracy, freedom of speech and gender equality. Islam is instead portrayed as a 'backward culture', bearing medieval, rigid and intolerant views of the world.

Central in the eyes of the DDL is the threat that Islam, and thus Muslims, pose to Danish society. The approach is in many respects similar to the discourses

promoted by several contemporary right-wing populist anti-immigration parties,<sup>17</sup> but differing in the militant activism attached to these positions and in the recommended solutions. Following the English Defence League, the DDL seeks to mobilise support at the local level by means of militant street-based activism and the use of social media, organising demonstrations that seek to provoke violent confrontations with local ethnic minorities.<sup>18</sup>

The DDL was the main organiser behind the European counter-Jihad meeting that took place in Aarhus on 31 March 2012, which attempted to give rise to an active Europe-wide network. The programme gathered figureheads from anti-Islam (/anti-Jihadist) movements across Europe, including the English, Swedish, Norwegian, Finnish and German sections of the Defence League network and of Stop the Islamization of Europe (SIOE). Less than one hundred individuals were present at the rally. The Aarhus demonstration showed the leadership issues within the DDL and its tensions with the other local far-right groups. Former DDL leader Kasper Mortensen, who had been expected to open the rally, was jailed before the rally for use of violence. DDL leader Philip Traulsen also withdrew from the list of speakers when a local paper revealed his prior membership of the group Blood & Honour. The rally was instead opened by DDL female member Freja Lindgren, who – together with Mimosa Koiranen of the Finnish Danish League – had been the only woman on the keynote speeches list. The records above clearly show the difficulties the DDL has to promote a public image free of ties to violent extremism and Nazi milieus, which the movement often maintains is the case.



## Conclusion

To understand the rise and development of right-wing extremism in Denmark, one must consider it within the context of political and social opportunities and constraints. It is also important to look at the ideological and organisational overlaps between *radical* and *extreme* forms of the phenomenon. This report mainly focuses on the latter, setting out the main extreme right groups and milieus that have developed in Denmark, particularly discussing their overall ideology, key actors involved and forms of activism.

This report has outlined a difference between more traditional right-wing extremist groups, and new far-right groups promoting strong nationalist ideologies, combined with anti-Islam sentiments. However, the distinction between these types of movements is not clear-cut. In reality, the extreme right is a highly fragmented phenomenon in Denmark, and its members often are affiliated or loosely connected with multiple groups.

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# FINLAND

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Right-wing extremism in Finland has been characterised by both continuity and change. It has simultaneously been shaped by Finnish national political culture and embedded in international trends. Both historical right-wing ideologies (i.e. fascism and Nazism) and more recent ideologies from new radical right and counter-Jihad movements have found resonance in Finnish society. These ideologies have, however, been reshaped to resonate with salient domestic issues: anti-communism, the protection and advancement of Finnish culture and language, and integration into the EU. Although right-wing extremist organisations were prohibited between 1944 and 1989 under the terms of the peace treaty with the Soviet Union, far-right ideologies and sentiments have nonetheless been constant elements in Finnish politics. Right-wing extremism has, with some exceptions, tended to develop in the form of parliamentary political parties, and has therefore probably been less prone to extra-parliamentary violence than the phenomenon in other European countries.

## The history of right-wing extremism

The independence of Finland from Russia in 1917 was followed by a short, but violent, civil war in 1918. The conflict was multifaceted since it concerned independence from Russia (to remove the Russian troops from Finnish territory), the structure

of the state (socialism or liberal democracy) and class (the Reds, or workers, against the Whites, or peasants and bourgeoisie). These conflicts, particularly the anti-communist element, were picked up by existing right-wing extremist movements in the interwar period. Right-wing extremist movements largely sided with the Whites, attracting conservatives from cities and agrarians from the countryside.

However, although the experience of civil war generated deep collective wounds in Finnish society and divisions in domestic politics, it fostered a resistance to political violence. Moreover, the language divisions in Finland as a young bilingual independent state contributed to divisions in the right-wing extremist environment. Finally, Finland's geopolitical situation as a neighbour to the Soviet Union generated forced domestic consensus in foreign policy. These factors mitigated the development of a potent violent right-wing extremist scene in Finland. During the interwar period, three right-wing nationalist organisations were active.

**The Academic Karelia Society** (*Akateeminen Karjala Seura*, AKS) (1922-44) was a patriotic and nationalist association of academics and students defending Finnish language and promoting unity between the Finno-Ugrians<sup>1</sup> in Finland and its close neighbourhood. AKS promoted Finnish nationalism based on the promotion of Finnish language in the



national culture that developed in the latter part of the 19th Century when Finland was still an autonomous part of the Russian Empire. The broader *Fennoman*<sup>2</sup> movement opposed what they perceived to be the privileged rights of the Swedish-speaking minority (the status of Swedish as an 'official' language in Finland) and were strongly anti-communist, which was expressed in cultural terms as anti-Slavism. The main purpose of AKS was to make Finland a monolingual Finnish state.

**The Lapua Movement** (*Lapuan liike*) (1929-1932) was a radical right-wing anti-communist movement inspired by Italian fascism and connected to evangelical religious movements. It mobilised predominantly independent farmers from the "White" Ostrobothnia on the western coast of Finland. It shared strong anti-communist ideologies with the AKS, but where AKS focused on a cultural emphasis, the Lapua Movement aimed to have political influence. In 1929, approximately 12,000 supporters of the Lapua Movement marched on the Finnish capital, Helsinki, imitating a fascist march on Rome in 1922. The movement was anti-parliamentarian and was infamous for kidnapping high-profile politicians, whom it considered too soft on communism as they did not want to prohibit it by law. Among other prominent political figures, a former Finnish president was kidnapped and beaten by the Lapua Movement and then driven to the Finnish border with the Soviet Union (a common action by the movement). The movement's aim was essentially to create a sense of fear.

In 1932, the movement organised a violent revolt at a social democratic meeting in Mäntsälä. Arms were used against the participants at the meeting, sending

fears throughout Finnish society of a potential new civil war. The movement had approximately 600 activists, many of whom were armed, and more threatened to mobilise from the military. The organisation was, however, dissolved in March 1932.

The political party **Patriotic People's Movement** (*Isänmaallinen Kansanliike*, IKL) was formed after the demise of the Lapua Movement in 1932. IKL overlapped with the Lapua Movement in terms of personnel; indeed, the former leader of the Lapua Movement, Vihtori Kosola, was also the leader of IKL. The party accepted constitutionalism, and obeyed the parliamentary rules of the game. Nevertheless, IKL was still a Finnish expression of fascism. It combined strong anti-communism with pro-Germanism, and believed that the territories lost to the Soviet Union should be reclaimed to make a "Grand Finland". The party received between 6 - 8 per cent of the vote in the parliamentary elections in the 1930s.

Following the peace treaty with Moscow in 1944, all "fascist organisations" were prohibited in Finland. Despite these restrictions, a number of right-wing movements and subcultures managed to maintain an active, if highly erratic, presence throughout the latter half of the 20th Century. Nationalist sentiments also remained within some of the established political parties, including the Centre Party and National Coalition Party, but any nationalist activities were secret due to Finland's relations with the Soviet Union. Some grass-roots organisations, such as the Association of Finnish Culture and Identity (*Suomalaisuuden Liitto*),<sup>3</sup> pursued nationalist ideologies supporting the Finnish language and continued to politically pursue the goal of a monolingual Finnish state.



## Extreme right anti-immigration, anti-Islam and EU-sceptic groups

In the 1990s, the economic crisis, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, integration into the European Union and the effects of globalisation (i.e. immigration, a transformed industrial sector and increasing unemployment) constituted a fertile environment for the resurgence of right-wing extremism. In the late 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, skinheads (whose numbers were estimated to be between 400 and 1,000) committed racist crimes in the cities of Helsinki, Turku and Mikkeli. However, attacks on immigrants in the city of Joensuu constituted the first case of more organised racist violence brought to public attention in Finland. Skinhead activities calmed down towards the end of the 1990s, largely due to police and local government monitoring.<sup>4</sup>

According to SUPO (the Finnish security police) unorganised right-wing extremism decreased towards the beginning of the 21st Century; it has recently resurged again. SUPO estimates that there are 1000 to 2000 individuals involved in the Finnish right-wing extremist environment today. According to Kari Harju, a police researcher at SUPO, extremist activities have increased in locations where refugees and immigrants have been received and where immigration centres have been set up.<sup>5</sup> Many of these towns, such as Joensuu and Lieksa, are also characterised by above-average unemployment rates and an under-financed local government. An example of violence in Lieksa included a violent incident in October 2011, in which an individual of Somali background was stabbed, and one other individual suffered lacerations.<sup>6</sup> Despite these cases of violence, a lack of

leadership and general support has impeded the growth of *violent* right-wing movements in Finland.<sup>7</sup>

Those right-wing extremist groups which did mobilise in the late 1990s are better organised, more internationally connected, and aim for more political influence than the skinhead groups in the late 1980s. Because Finnish right-wing extremist organisations have political ambitions and have been able to promote their causes within the framework of parliamentary democracy, incentives to resort to open rebellion or violence have been few.

The internet has been an important tool for the Finnish extreme right, and is its main tool for recruitment, dissemination of information and discussion. The best-known right-wing extremist websites are *Hommaforum*<sup>8</sup> and the anti-Islam and counter-Jihad *Tundratabloids*.<sup>9</sup> There are also some internationally known Finnish bloggers operating online, such as the True Finns<sup>10</sup> parliamentarian (since 2011), Jussi Halla-aho's *Scripta*<sup>11</sup> and the more extreme counter-Jihadist *Vasarahammer*.<sup>12</sup> Both of these bloggers are connected to international anti-Islam networks and publish regularly in English, for example on blogs like *Gates of Vienna*.<sup>13</sup>

The online forum *Hommaforum* has fostered discussions that have led to the founding of new political parties (for example, *Muutos* 2011). It has often been a space for deliberations between extreme right activists on political strategies and how best to attain political influence in Finland. For example, for the populist political party True Finns, the decision on whether to form a separate political party or join an existing party was partly carried out on this online forum.<sup>14</sup> The forum has been critical in connecting



like-minded people on the far right, providing “alternative”, filtered information.<sup>15</sup> There are 8,000 registered users on the website.

**Suomen Sisu**<sup>16</sup> was founded in 1998 out of groups of youth, largely male, coming from a variety of backgrounds in Helsinki. These youth admired AKS and had connections to a re-formed version of IKL from the 1990s. Suomen Sisu was the youth organisation of the Association of Finnish Culture and Identity until 2000, when cooperation between the groups ended when the media reported that some members of Suomen Sisu had neo-Nazi connections. Suomen Sisu and its membership are closely linked to the website *Hommaforum*.

Suomen Sisu combines anti-immigration and Islamophobic ideology with the aim of protecting and advancing Finnish culture and language. As of 2011, the organisation had approximately 700 members. One third of the 40 True Finns parliamentarians have a background online, both with *Hommaforum* and Suomen Sisu. These representatives have been particularly influential in radicalising the True Finns’ immigration policies. The True Finns have not yet required that party members give up their membership of Suomen Sisu in order to assume positions within the party, but some have done so anyway to avoid accusations of extremism. However, some high-profile representatives of the True Finns, including Jussi Halla-aho, Olli Immonen, James Hirvisaari and Teemu Laitinen, are members of Suomen Sisu.

In 2012, Jussi Halla-aho was sentenced under hate speech laws and was declared guilty of breaching religious peace by the Highest Court of Justice, due

to statements where he connected Islam with paedophilia. Prior to this, in September 2011, he was forced to take several weeks’ leave from the parliamentary party group when he stated that there was a need for strong military invention to quell demonstrations against the EU requirements for Greece. Similarly, in 2011, James Hirvisaari was sentenced for hate speech after statements against Muslims. Following this incident, in 2012 Hirvisaari’s assistant, Helena Eronen, declared on Facebook that immigrants and sexual minorities should wear armbands, harkening back to Nazi enforcement of Jewish identification badges. When Hirvisaari supported his assistant following this incident, he was expelled from the True Finns for five months. The party leadership of the True Finns has been reluctant to take too harsh measures against more extreme party representatives, as there is an obvious risk that the party could then split.

The anti-Islam and anti-immigration movement the **Finnish Defence League (FDL)**, was formed in 2010 as a spin-off of the English Defence League, and is part of the international Defence League movements. The organisation has approximately 100 members and takes part in various international anti-Islam activities. In addition to its anti-Islam platform, the FDL opposes multiculturalism and ‘excessive’ immigration to Finland. The leadership includes, among others, individuals with historical ties to Finnish neo-Nazi movements, along with individuals connected to the True Finns. One supporter of FDL, also a True Finns representative from the Oulu municipal assembly, recently stated after the murder of someone of migrant background, that “a war is going on, and as in every war, decorations should be handed out”. This individual was expelled from the



True Finns; however, there is no general prohibition within the True Finns against joining the FDL.

*The Finnish Resistance Movement (Suomen vastarinta)*<sup>17</sup> is the main Finnish National Socialist organisation, and is the Finnish branch of the Nordic Resistance Movement. The organisation is anti-parliamentary and firmly opposes “bourgeois society and politics.” It aims to protect Finnish history, identity, culture and fight multiculturalism. Furthermore, the movement is critical of the EU, and aims to create a Nordic union. The movement advocates extra-parliamentary activities, claiming that “popular rule will be installed through uncompromising political strife.” It employs military rhetoric and characterizes its members as fighters, who must maintain “good psychological and physical shape” in order to be ready for the fight. The movement furthermore publishes a journal called *Vastarinta* and organises activities, study circles and training camps. It cultivates and maintains international links beyond its Nordic cooperation, including with the Italian CasaPound and Freie Nationale Strukturen.

In 2010, members of the Finnish Resistance Movement attacked participants at the 2010 Helsinki Pride parade. Three people were arrested and later convicted of 88 assaults and 71 cases of violation of political freedom. In the Spring of 2011, members of the movement were involved in another scuffle at the election campaign tent of the National Coalition Party. In October the same year, the membership list of the organisation was leaked by hackers, and it became public that one of the members was the political assistant to the True Finns parliamentarian and party Vice Chairman Juho Eerola, and this individual has remained in her position. The movement’s main activities include

distributing pamphlets, putting up propaganda stickers and maintaining a regularly updated website.

## Attitudes, racist crime and discrimination

Finland has had relatively short experience as a country of immigration, and has largely been a country of emigration to the USA and Sweden. In the Second World War, Finland resettled approximately 400,000 people from eastern territories that were lost to the Soviet Union. In the 1960s, approximately 300,000 people moved from Finland to Sweden in search of work. Political consensus on a restrictive immigration policy prevailed until the late 1980s. Immigration has increased as a consequence of Finland’s integration into the EU, and as a function of international crises and wars. The immigrant population in Finland has increased six-fold between 1990 and 2009 (from 26,300 to 155,700). Today, around 5 per cent of the total population of 5.3 million claim a foreign background (foreign born, foreign citizenship or foreign language). The largest immigrant groups are from Estonia, Russia, Sweden, Somalia and Iraq. The indigenous Sami people and the Roma population are minorities that experience prejudice and are discriminated against in Finnish society, but there is less systematic data on attitudes towards these groups.

Surveys of public attitudes towards foreign labour and asylum seekers have been conducted since the late 1980s. Finns have become slightly more positive towards labour immigrants, but more negative towards refugees. In 1987, 16 per cent of Finns believed that Finland should welcome fewer refugees, as compared to 32 per cent in 2003. Overall, refugees from non-European countries tend to face greater prejudice in Finnish society than immigrants from Russia and Estonia.



Table 1. Attitudes to labour immigration and asylum seekers in Finland 1987-2003

Years	1987	1993	1998	2003
<b>Finland should accept foreign labour</b>				
More than now	21	14	21	30
Just as much as now	34	24	34	32
Less than now	44	61	42	38
Don't know	2	1	2	0
<b>Finland should accept refugees</b>				
More than now	41	20	19	19
Just as now	40	34	45	48
Less than now	16	45	35	32
Don't know	2	1	1	1

Source: Jaakkola, Magdalena, 2005, *Suomalaisten suhtautuminen maahanmuuttajiin vuosina 1987-2003*, Helsinki, Työministeriö.

Table 2. Attitudes to foreigners in Finland, given the ageing population 1998-2012

**“It should be made easier for foreigners to move to Finland, given that it is an ageing population and there will be a future reduction in population.”**

Year	Agree	Disagree	Balance
2012	32	43	-9
2011	25	56	-31
2010	25	49	-24
2009	29	49	-20
2006	35	42	-7
2004	43	45	-2
2002	29	50	-21
2000	28	50	-22
1998	19	61	-42

Source: Haavisto, Ilkka, 2012, *Ovi raouttuu Suomen maahanmuuttoasenteet 2012*, Helsinki, Elinkeinoelämän Valtuuskunta (EVA).

Attitudes tend to be more negative and restrictive to immigration during economic downturn, for example in 1993 and between 2008 and 2011. Since 2008, the economic downturn combined with the political mobilisation of the True Finns on an anti-immigrant and anti-Islam platform are likely to have had an impact on public attitudes.

Women, those with higher education, and those residing in urban areas tend to be more positive to immigration. Younger and elderly people are generally more negative towards immigration, particularly young men between the ages of 15 - 24. Seventy-four per cent of True Finns voters oppose immigration, but anti-immigration attitudes are common in the Centre



Party as well (47 per cent of its members are negative towards immigration). The supporters of the Green Party and the Swedish People’s Party are least critical; one out of five voters in these parties is negative towards increased immigration.

### Racist crime

While racist crimes have been systematically recorded in Finland since 2003, Finnish legislation does not recognise hate crime and racially motivated criminality (against individuals, groups, property or institutions) as a separate criminal offence. Rather, criminal activities inspired by racism tend to be subsumed within existing anti-discrimination legislation.

Finnish law recognises discrimination on the basis of perceived ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, transgender identity or appearance and disability. The number of racially motivated crimes reported to the police has increased since the recording of racist crimes started. It is difficult to assess whether the increase reflects an actual increase in crimes or increased awareness and reporting. The most common types of racially motivated crimes in 2010 were assault (40 per cent), offence (15 per cent) and threat (15 per cent). Reliable information on the involvement of extremist groups in racist crime is lacking. A report from 2004

states that 10 per cent of suspected crimes were perpetrated by skinheads, but in later reports extreme groups have not been mentioned.<sup>18</sup> Among those who commit racially motivated crimes, males under 35 form the majority.

The backgrounds of the groups that are most often subject to racially motivated crimes are Somali (13 crimes/1,000 Somalis in Finland), Turkish (10/1,000), Iraqi (9/1,000) and Afghani (7/1,000). Racist crimes have decreased in number against Estonians, Russians and Swedish-speakers (0-2/1,000). The vulnerability of the Somali population in Finland was assessed in an EU Agency for Fundamental Rights monitoring report on EU 27 in which Finland recorded the highest rates for incidences of assault and threats towards Somalis; 74 incidents of assault or threat for every 100 Somali interviewees were recorded.<sup>19</sup>

### Conclusion

Finnish right-wing extremism has predominantly been non-violent. However, the Finnish political system has been characterised by a high degree of tolerance towards expressions of racism. According to SUPO, when individuals inclined towards extremist ideologies and activities can find a place within the democratic system, they may be less

Table 3. Suspected hate or racially motivated crimes in Finland

Suspected hate or racially motivated crimes in Finland							
2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008*	2009*	2010*
387	400	412	442	454	755	285	741

\*Data 2008-2010 cannot be compared with 2003-2007 because of different measurement criteria  
Source: Niemi, Jenni. 2011, *Poliisin tietoon tullut viharikollisuus Suomessa 2010*, Tampere Poliisiammattikoulun raportteja 95.



inclined to engage in political violence.<sup>20</sup> Though SUPO does agree there are reasons to worry about hate speech and the radicalisation of the political debate, it is agreed that it is important for these sentiments to be expressed within the democratic system. Nevertheless, the police monitors the internet for racism and, following the Norwegian example, has launched a website that allows individuals to report racist content on the internet.

The Finnish right-wing extremist milieu is connected in some ways to the political system, mostly through an overlap of personnel between movements and parties. Some researchers believe this to have hindered the further radicalisation of the extreme

right in Finland. Several political parties have been formed from the extreme right milieu (e.g. *Muutos 2011* and *Suomen Kansan Sinivalkoiset*), but these political parties have tended not to be successful as they are often publicly perceived as single-issue extremist parties. A more successful route for the extreme right milieu has been to engage with existing political parties that enjoy popular legitimacy, as Suomen Sisu has done with the True Finns. Today, several representatives with connections to Suomen Sisu hold important positions within the True Finns, and hold seats in the Finnish parliament.<sup>21</sup>

## Endnotes and bibliography

1. The Finno-Ugrians are peoples within Europe that speak languages of the Finno-Ugric language family, including the Finns, Estonians, Mordvins, and Hungarians.
2. In the 19th Century, the Fennomans were a movement that sought to raise Finnish language and Finnish culture to the position of a national language and culture which shaped Finns' national identity.
3. [www.suomalaisuudenliitto.fi](http://www.suomalaisuudenliitto.fi)
4. Puuronen, Vesa, 2011, *Rasistinen Suomi*, 204-207. Helsinki, Gaudeamus.
5. Helsingin Sanomat, 2011-11-03 <http://www.hs.fi/english/article/SUPO+reports+resurgence+of+far+right/1135269801750>
6. Helsingin Sanomat 2011-10-13 <http://www.hs.fi/english/article/Racial+tensions+heighten+in+North+Karelian+town+of+Lieksa+/1135269675177>
7. Jokinen, Thomas, 2011, *Ääriliikkeet Suomessa 1990-luvulla ja 2000-luvulla* in Kullberg, Antti (ed) *Suomi, terrorismi, Supo. Miksi koiria ei haukkunut. Miksi ja miten Suomi on välittänyt terroristien toiminnan leviämistä* (WSOY 2011)
8. <http://www.hommaforum.org>
9. <http://tundratabloids.com>
10. True Finns is a populist nationalist political party in Finland, which won 19.1 per cent of the vote in the 2011 parliamentary election. It is the successor party to the agrarian populist Finnish Rural party formed in 1959.
11. <http://www.halla-aho.com/scripta/>
12. <http://vasarahammer.blogspot.se/>
13. <http://gatesofvienna.blogspot.se/>
14. Many right-wing extremist activists joined the True Finns, which was formed 1995 and combines EU-scepticism and anti-immigration sentiment with support for a tax-based redistributive welfare state (see Jungar 2011, for an analysis).
15. Hannula, Milla, 2011, *Maassa maan tavalla Maahanmuuttokritiikin lyhyt historia*, Helsinki. Otava
16. <http://www.facebook.com/suomensisury>; [www.suomensisu.fi](http://www.suomensisu.fi)
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19. European Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2009, *EU-MIDIS European Minorities and Discrimination Service Main Result Report*. [http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\\_uploads/664-eumidis\\_mainreport\\_conference-edition\\_en\\_.pdf](http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/664-eumidis_mainreport_conference-edition_en_.pdf)
20. Interview with Knappe in Helsingin Sanomat 18 October 2011.
21. Recently, Jussi Halla-aho announced that he is prepared to challenge the present party leader, Timo Soini, for the leadership of the party.



## The history of right-wing extremism

Historically, post-war Germany has lacked a successful, unified and well-organised extreme right. The historic failure of extreme right-wing parties to rally a mass and sustained following has been traced to a combination of factors. These include: the country's history, which has heavily stigmatised right-wing extremists in the minds of voters and potential political allies; internal organisational weaknesses within extreme right groups, which have frequently been weakened by factionalism and the absence of a strong, charismatic and unifying leader; and, lastly, the willingness of mainstream political parties and other actors in German society (e.g. Thilo Sarrazin's critique of multiculturalism) to co-opt aspects of the extreme right agenda.<sup>1</sup> However, it is also clear that the failure of the German extreme right in the electoral arena does not owe much to a lack of public demand. Recent surveys of public opinion have pointed to a significant degree of receptiveness within the German population to key ideas, claims and policies that are advocated by the extreme right. Nationally, for example, this research indicates that 52 per cent of the population agree with the statement that Germany "should protect its own culture from the influence of other cultures", 50 per cent agree "there are too many immigrants in their country", 45 per cent agree that "some races are more gifted than others"; 41 per cent agree that "immigrants are a strain on the welfare system"; and almost 20 per cent, or one fifth of the

population, agree that 'Jews have too much influence in Germany'.<sup>2</sup> There also appears significant receptiveness to claims concerning the alleged "threat" from Muslims and Islam, which are increasingly central to extreme right propaganda, for example: 53 per cent consider Islam to be a religion of intolerance; 46 per cent agree there are too many Muslims in Germany; and only 17 per cent perceive Islamic or Muslim cultures as fitting well into Germany and Europe. Research by one think tank also estimates that while the number of citizens expressing extreme right-wing views in the Western half of the country has fallen, it still comprises over 7 per cent while the equivalent figure in the East has risen to 15.8 per cent.<sup>3</sup> Clearly, such views are not unique to Germany, and are broadly comparable to trends seen elsewhere in Western Europe, but they do undermine the view that the historic marginalisation of the German extreme right can be explained by a distinct public opinion climate.<sup>4</sup>

However, while the extreme right has collectively lacked a strong, national presence in German politics, several movements have proved able to rally significant levels of support at the local and regional level, and perhaps more importantly recruit and sustain a relatively active number of committed activists. One overview of this scene in 2011 estimated that there were approximately 30,000 individuals in Germany who could be classified as "right-wing extremists", and of these 4,800 were "organised neo-Nazis" who were supporting around



160 distinct associations. More broadly it was estimated that there were in the region of 13,000 citizens involved in formal extreme right-wing parties, and that a total of 9,500 citizens in Germany were “ready to engage in racist violence”.<sup>5</sup> Official data collected by the authorities paint a slightly different picture, estimating that in 2011 there were 22,400 members of extreme right-wing groups, which actually represents a slight decline from 25,000 in 2010, and 26,600 in 2009. Importantly, however, while such data point to a decline in rates of extreme right party membership, it was also estimated that the number of right-wing activists who exhibit a propensity toward violence had actually increased, from 9,500 in 2010 to 9,800 in 2011. At the same time, and against the backdrop of a decline in *party* memberships, the number of citizens involved in neo-Nazi groups outside of elections had increased, from 5,000 in 2009, to 6,000 in 2010. This implied turn toward a more confrontational and provocative style of right-wing extremist activity is further underscored by the finding that the number of recorded demonstrations by the extreme right in 2010 was an estimated 260, as compared to 240 in 2010.<sup>6</sup>

Rather than being spread evenly across the country, right-wing extremism has often exhibited a distinct geographical pattern, and has tended to be stronger in Eastern Germany, and areas such as Saxony-Anhalt, Thuringia, Saarland and Mecklenburg-West Pomerania. Of all organisations, the most significant has been the National Democratic Party of Germany (*Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands, NPD*), which was established in 1964 and following the outcome of an alliance of different groups, including overt neo-Nazis. Adhering to a combination of National Socialism, anti-communism and ultra-conservatism, during the 1960s the NPD established

an elected presence in seven regional assemblies, before polling over 4 per cent at the 1969 general election and only narrowly failing to enter parliament. As the NPD entered a period of factionalism and withdrew from elections, 1983 saw the birth of the Republicans (*Die Republikaner, REP*), which exhibited extremist tendencies, and reflected an attempt by activists who were dissatisfied with mainstream conservatism to establish a more electorally viable anti-immigrant and radical conservative formation. Under the leadership of Franz Schönhuber, and until the mid-1990s, the REP enjoyed some significant success in the Western half of Germany, notably in areas such as Baden-Württemberg, and at the 1989 European elections when they polled over 7 per cent.

The 1990s saw the NPD enter a new phase of evolution under Udo Voigt. Its programme combined populist, anti-capitalist, anti-democratic, nationalist revolutionary and racist ideas, while the party began a concerted effort to build links with right-wing extremists from neo-Nazi groups and Free Associations (*Freien Kameradschaften*). This multifaceted strategy was confirmed in 1998, and anchored in three aspects: a battle for the streets, a battle for the minds, and a battle for electoral success. The strategy was expanded to incorporate the goal of unifying the broader, and fragmented, extreme right-wing. During the period 2001-2003, an attempt to ban the NPD on the grounds that the party violated the constitution failed, in large part due to the extent of existing state infiltration by the secret services (thereby making it difficult to ascertain the influence of secret services over party decisions). In the immediate years thereafter, the NPD enjoyed some significant electoral success in Eastern Germany, in 2004 polling over 9 per cent in Saxony, over 4 per cent in Saarland; in 2006, over 7 per cent in



Mecklenburg-West Pomerania and, in 2009, over 5 per cent in Saxony and 4 per cent in Thuringia. It was also during this period (in 2004) that the NPD formed an alliance with the DVU in the hope of improving its electoral prospects (the DVU had been founded in 1971 but was not formalised as a party until 1987). While in alliance, the DVU entered parliament in Brandenburg and the NPD entered parliament in Saxony. Though a more formal alliance was announced in 2010, this collapsed in 2012 when the DVU announced its dissolution. The broader failure of the NPD and the extreme right more broadly in Germany to connect with a larger base of support has arguably owed more to agency than structure, with the party continuously suffering from a series of internal disputes. Nonetheless, and despite internal problems, in 2011 authorities concluded that the NPD remained the central force within the right-wing extremist subculture.

## Non-electoral movements and violence

While Germany has lacked an electorally successful extreme right movement, it does host an active non-electoral extreme right subculture. While parties like the Republicans and DVU emerged out of a period of fragmentation within the extreme right, the early 1970s saw the emergence of more overtly neo-Nazi paramilitary-style groups such as the Wehrsportgruppe Hoffmann. In more recent years, a series of alternative right-wing extremist groups and movements have also emerged to target specific issues. Associations such as Pro-Cologne (*Pro Köln*) and Pro-NRW (Pro North-Rhine Westphalia) have focused more strongly on opposing the perceived threat from Islam and – at the community level - the

construction of new mosques and Islamic institutions. By 2004, the group had secured representation in Cologne and given birth to offshoots. In recent years, groups such as the Citizens' Initiative to Stop Foreigners in Bavaria (*Bürgerinitiative Ausländerstopp*) have also sought to mobilise public opposition to Islam and Muslims, obtaining limited representation in Nuremberg and Munich. Another group highlighted by authorities in 2011 is the Immortals (*Die Unsterblichen*), who focus on staging unregistered rallies (usually at night) and using social media to publicize their ideas and attract new followers.

It is also important to note the particular significance of locally based Free Associations, of Kameradschaft, which comprise a few dozen individuals in a more informal and loosely-knit association, and which have been associated with the development of so-called “no-go” areas. Some estimate there are approximately 150 regional and supra-regional Free Associations in Germany, with the “stronghold” often being identified as Saxony. Some of these groups have been prohibited by the state, including Kameradschaft Oberhavel and neo-Nazi skinhead groups such as *Sächsische Schweiz*. Another example arrived in 2007, when *Sturm 34* was banned after promoting National Socialism and attempting to establish national liberated zones in Saxony, and in ways that undermined the constitution.<sup>7</sup> Particularly since 2002, Germany has also experienced the growth of Autonomen Nationalisten, or Autonomous Nationalists, which are rooted mainly in Berlin and Dortmund. By 2010 it was estimated that autonomous nationalists comprised 20 per cent of the neo-Nazi scene in Germany, and in 2011 it was considered that they remained highly significant on the basis that they showed an ability to mobilise



significant numbers of followers and impacted on the public image of the scene (although it was reported that their numbers had slightly declined in 2011). It is also worth noting the importance of individual activists or cells who lack formal membership within extremist groups, but who nonetheless remain committed to right-wing extremist beliefs, literature and cultural activities. Security agencies have, for example, concluded that right-wing extremist music remains “highly important” to the wider extreme right scene, and that while the number of concerts had remained at broadly similar levels, the number of groups active in the music scene had spiked in 2011.

Turning more explicitly to the issue of violence, it was in the early 1990s that Germany experienced a significant increase in levels of extreme right-wing violence, which some traced to “*Fascho*” or neo-fascist groups that had been active in the 1980s, and primarily in Eastern Germany. The salience of right-wing attacks against minorities and asylum-seekers increased following the cases of Hoyerswerda and Rostock, as well as race-related murders in Solingen and Mölln. Following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, levels of racially and religiously motivated violence increased significantly before stalling and reversing in the late 1990s, and then resuming from 2001 onward. Between 2002 and 2008, it was estimated that violent crimes linked to the extreme right increased by 16 per cent, while it has also been suggested that the probability of falling victim to extreme right-wing attacks remains three to four times higher in Eastern rather than Western Germany. According to one study in 2010, right-wing extremist or racist violence has resulted in the deaths of at least 137 people in the period since the country’s reunification.

While it is difficult to assess the longitudinal trend in right-wing violence, in 2010 authorities concluded that the ‘potential for aggression has grown considerably’, but especially in regard to conflict with left-wing opponents. This potential was reflected in the confiscation in 2010 of several improvised explosive and incendiary devices at an extreme right-wing demonstration in Berlin, and which were linked to the neo-Nazi group, *Kameradschaft Aachener Land* (KAL). Authorities have also asserted that right-wing extremists are demonstrating a greater willingness to use physical violence against their political opponents, and sometimes also the police, and are increasingly threatening members of alternative, left-wing groups. These concerns were revived at the end of 2011, and with the discovery of the National Socialist Underground (NSU), a neo-Nazi cell which has been linked to series of murders, criminality and a bombing in Cologne. Recent coverage of the NSU case has focused on alleged failures within bureaucracies, and has led to the resignation of several security officials. More robust data is available from the Office for the Protection of the Constitution, which in 2011 concluded that a total of 16,142 criminal offences were classified as having links to right-wing extremism, an increase of 1.5 per cent since 2010. Of these offences, the overwhelming majority (80 per cent) involved illegal propaganda activities. In contrast, 217 offences involved violent crimes against left-wing opponents, while 61 involved violent crime against other opponents. These data also reveal that right-wing motivated crimes easily eclipse the number of crimes linked to left-wing ideologies, which stood at 4,502.<sup>8</sup>

Who is supporting the extreme right in Germany, and who are the perpetrators of violence? In terms of electoral supporters, research suggests that extreme



right parties such as the DVU and NPD tend to attract support from less well-educated, working-class men, and mainly younger age groups. These electoral supporters also exhibit a clear set of attitudes: they are politically dissatisfied; distrustful of institutions; racist and welfare chauvinist in their outlook (i.e. believing that minorities are a burden or threat to public services and welfare, and that these should be restricted to members of the ethnic in-group). Analysis of individual extreme right-wing supporters suggests that most are unemployed, self-employed and manual workers, who also tend to be young (though not always), lack formal educational qualifications and are non-religious.<sup>9</sup> Earlier research on the perpetrators of right-wing extremist violence in Germany suggested that most tend to be young men. Drawing on police data, for example, one study found that most of the 148 individuals who carried out “anti-foreigner” violence were men (only 3.7 per cent were female), were youths or adolescents (90 per cent were under the age of 20 years old), had very low levels of formal education, were more likely than average to experience unemployment, and often had a background of involvement with criminality.<sup>10</sup> These offenders were then divided into four distinct categories, based on their attitudes: (1) **Hangers-on**, who lacked an understanding of right-wing extremist ideology, were not overtly anti-foreigner but were driven more by group influences such as a desire to conform; (2) **Criminal youth**, who tended to be older, had a long history of criminality, a pre-existing inclination towards violence but who lacked a broader right-wing extremist worldview; (3) **Xenophobes** who were overtly hostile toward minority groups, but who lacked a broader right-wing extremist ideology; and (4) **Ideologically-aware right-wing extremists** who were active within

extreme right groups and movements, and who viewed anti-foreigner violence as a by-product of their wider ideological worldview (as opposed to an “end” in its own right). A separate study similarly concluded that the perpetrators of “hate violence” in Germany in the 1990s tended to be young men, were less likely than offenders in earlier decades to be actively involved with neo-Nazism, and were also less likely to exhibit a strong understanding of right-wing extremist ideology. In fact, at least one third of these attacks were undertaken by youth with no direct link to right-wing extremist groups, suggesting there had been a shift away from membership-based violence toward more youthful and non-aligned acts of violence that were driven less by ideological beliefs than a combination of “thrill-seeking”, opportunistic and criminal motivations.<sup>11</sup> These findings are mirrored in other research on right-wing violence in Germany, which provides additional evidence that perpetrators are often not motivated by a coherent, ideological worldview. Rather, those offenders who were examined by Willems, for example, did not associate themselves with explicitly neo-Nazi groups but rather wider subcultures, informal groups and organisations that often lacked a distinct focus.<sup>12</sup> Such findings reflect similar data in areas like Scandinavia, which points to the importance of youth gangs, and groups that lack formal structures and also ideological coherency.<sup>13</sup>

It is important to note, however, that other practitioner-orientated research on the perpetrators of right-wing violence challenges the popular assumption that most are men who grew up in broken families, from the lower social classes in society, and from the East of Germany. Based on over a decade of experience of working on disengagement



from the extreme right, EXIT Germany argues that right-wing extremists mirror the diversity of society, observing: “All classes and socio-economic backgrounds are represented, as are women, children, and whole families.”<sup>14</sup> While there is a clear male bias among the perpetrators of right-wing violence, EXIT also draws attention to the active participation of women who often occupy influential positions, a point that is reflected in the recent case of NSU member Beate Zschäpe, who the media reports has also been approached by Anders Breivik.<sup>15</sup> EXIT also points to the development of “second and third generation neo-Nazi families”, suggesting these are more common in Germany than other European states, although it should be noted that comparative research on right-wing extremist activists has also

pointed to the crucial importance of family socialization in the recruitment process.<sup>16</sup>

In conclusion, this brief exploratory report makes clear that while the extreme right wing within Germany has lacked a national electoral presence, it has contributed to a diverse and active subculture. This comprises a variety of groups and parties, many of which differ in terms of their precise strategic and ideological focus. While there is a body of research on both the levels and perpetrators of violence, the extent to which this is comparable to trends and developments elsewhere in Europe remains largely unclear, and warrants further research.

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# HUNGARY

Peter Kreko

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## The history of right-wing extremism

When state socialism collapsed in 1990, the Hungarian radical left was a spent force. No far-left movements managed to gain any ground in the early years of Hungary's new democracy. People who opposed the market-based system therefore found their voice in the extreme right. Even so, it took a long time for the far right to make any political waves. The only exception was István Csurka's Hungarian Justice and Life Party (*Magyar Igazság és Élet Pártja*, MIÉP), which squeaked past the 5 per cent threshold for parliamentary representation in the 1998 election, mostly thanks to low voter turnout. In the 2002 election, MIÉP failed to get enough votes to remain in parliament.

During the early 1990s, the skinhead movement was relatively strong in Hungary, holding regular marches, concerts and events. Young skinhead groups were also regular participants in MIÉP rallies, despite the fact that supporters of MIÉP tended to be middle-aged and older people. In the second half of the decade, a neo-Nazi party, the Hungarian Welfare Party (*Magyar Népjóléti Szövetség*) was formed under the leadership of Albert Szabó.<sup>1</sup> However, this group did not have significant support and collapsed in the early 2000s after Szabó withdrew from politics and emigrated to Australia. After 2002, the radical and extreme right was practically invisible in Hungary,

even on the party level (see Table 1 below on the support for radical right parties). The skinhead movement became marginal, and later transformed into a broader "national radical" youth movement surrounding *Jobbik*, a youth university movement that had transformed into a political party in 2003, and its allies.

A turning point was reached on 17 September 2006. On that day, the Hungarian media acquired a recording of the then Socialist Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány admitting that he had deliberately lied about the state of Hungary's economy in order to win re-election the previous April (the infamous "Őszöd Speech"). Radical right rioters poured into Budapest's streets demanding Gyurcsány's resignation, clashing with the police and plunging the city into chaos for days. The turmoil in Hungary's capital and the popular anger toward the Socialists gave the extreme right the opportunity it needed to regroup. Old ultra-right formations began to recover and new ones sprouted.

It soon became clear that Jobbik was taking the leading role in the resurgence and reorganisation of the far right. The party had run for Parliament in April 2006 in cooperation with MIÉP and failed to win a single seat. But in the October 2006 municipal elections, Jobbik successfully ran some joint candidates for mayor with *Fidesz* and other right-wing parties. At the end of 2006, following public



Table 1: Electoral performance of radical right parties in Hungary, 1994-2010

Year	Party	Election	Percentage (on party list)
1994	MIÉP	National Parliament	1.6%
1998	MIÉP	National Parliament	5.5%
2002	MIÉP	National Parliament	4.4%
2006	MIÉP and Jobbik ( <i>"Harmadik Út"</i> )	National Parliament	2.2%
2009	Jobbik	European Parliament	14.8%
2010	Jobbik	National Parliament	16.7%

Note: The threshold for getting into the parliament in Hungary is 5%

outrage over the lynching of a teacher by the local Roma community in Olaszliszka (a village in south-eastern Hungary), Jobbik launched its campaign against "Gypsy crime", successfully tapping into popular prejudice against Hungary's Roma minority.

The watershed moment came in 2007, when Jobbik spawned the Hungarian Guard (*Magyar Gárda*), a paramilitary organisation whose uniforms evoked memories of Nazi-era Hungary (see Box 1 for more details on the relationship between Jobbik and the Guard). Hungarian courts banned the Guard in July 2009, but by then, the group had already succeeded in boosting Jobbik's position. It was both a magnet for media coverage, and a unifying force for right-wing radicals: smaller radical and extremist groups that had once competed with each other now lined up behind Jobbik, which recorded huge electoral successes in 2009 (14.8 per cent) and 2010 (16.7 per cent).

It is important to note that Jobbik was a clearly independent political force that succeeded in reorganising a previously divided far right, rather than simply the "creation" of a resurgent movement, as it is frequently stated in domestic political debates in Hungary.

## Characteristics of the extreme right

As in most other countries, the Hungarian far right is neither united nor homogeneous. Far-right organisations in Hungary may be divided into three different, yet partly overlapping categories:

- Political parties functioning within the confines of the democratic political system (even if they criticise it) and seeking votes;
- Movements and groups, often affiliated with political parties or supporting them, but not standing in elections (e.g. Hungarian Guard and its successors);
- Marginal neo-Nazi and Hungarist<sup>2</sup> organisations looking to distance themselves from the rest of the far right and openly aiming to overthrow the democratic system.

Despite their organisational differences, all three types of group share a number of racist, anti-Semitic, anti-globalist, anti-capitalist and mystic<sup>3</sup> or ultra-nationalist beliefs. The key actors in the Hungarian extreme right scene are highlighted in Table 2. Below, the most significant of these groups are outlined in more detail.



Table 2: The far-right landscape in Hungary

Name	Type of organisation	Far right type	Ideology	Attitudes to democracy	Risk	Scope
Movement for Better Hungary	political party	radical	ultranationalist ethnocentrist (anti-Roma) anti-Semitic	ambivalent	political	national
Hungarian Party of Justice and Life	political party	populist	ultranationalist anti-Semitic	accepts	ideological	national
Sixty-Four Counties Youth Movement	civic association	radical	ultranationalist irredentist anti-Semitic	critical	political/ violent	national*
New Hungarian Guard	civic association	radical	ultranationalist ethnocentrist anti-Semitic	critical	political	multi-regional
For a Better Future Civic Guard Association	civic association	radical	ultranationalist ethnocentrist anti-Semitic	critical	violent	multi-regional
Protective Hungarian Guard Movement	civic association	radical	ultranationalist ethnocentrist anti-Semitic	critical	violent	multi-regional
National Guard Troops	civic association	radical	ultranationalist ethnocentrist anti-Semitic	critical	ideological/ violent	regional
Hungarian National Frontline	civic association	extremist	neo-Nazi (Hungarist)	hostile	violent	multi-regional
Pax Hungarica	informal	extremist	neo-Nazi (Hungarist)	hostile	violent	multi-regional
Army of Outlaws	informal	radical	ultranationalist ethnocentrist anti-Semitic	critical	violent	regional

\*with international branches

Source: Peter Kreko and Attila Juhasz (2012). *Loved and Hated - Commonalities and Differences between the Slovak and Hungarian Far Right*.<sup>4</sup>



**Movement for a Better Hungary** (*Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom*) is a far-right political party that was established in 2003, having grown out of the student movement Rightist Youth Community (*Jobboldali Ifjúsági Közösség*). At the European Parliament elections in 2009, Jobbik secured 3 seats, having received over 427,000 votes (14.8 per cent). In the 2010 general elections, it passed the parliamentary threshold as the third most popular party (16.7 per cent), boasting more than 855,000 votes. Persistently high levels of support since 2010 have made Jobbik one of the strongest parties in the European far right, although it is definitely more radical than other parties carrying the same political label in Western Europe.

This radicalism is visible not only in the ideology of the party, but also in the relationship between Jobbik and the Hungarian Guard, which currently exists as a banned paramilitary organisation (see Box 1). The ideology embraced by Jobbik is essentially anti-liberal. It refutes the liberal interpretation of human rights, and remains ethnocentric, irredentist, homophobic and anti-Semitic. In its economic policies, the party opposes free-market liberalism, while in terms of foreign policy it has shown a strong orientation towards Eastern partners (notably Iran and Turkey).

**Sixty-Four Counties Youth Movement** (*Hatvannégy Vármegye Ifjúsági Mozgalom*, HVIM) is an irredentist, ultranationalist, anti-Semitic youth organisation. It was founded in 2001 by László Toroczkai, who currently represents Jobbik at the county level, and openly embraces some neo-Nazi views. The honorary leader of the organisation is György Gyula Zagya, a Member of Parliament for

the Jobbik caucus, who was recently charged for assaulting several journalists. The main goals of the organisation are to secure territorial revisions that would restore the pre-Trianon borders of Hungary.<sup>5</sup>

As an ally of Jobbik, HVIM created a network of sub-organisations of different sizes throughout the Carpathian Basin. These local and regional groups are active in organising youth events that seek to promote the ideology of the far right. HVIM also organises the Hungarian Island, a summer youth festival which in broader far-right groups participate. The leaders of the organisation have at times openly talked about the possibility of using violence in order to change the system. In 2011, a former leader of HVIM, László Toroczkai, praised Anders Behring Breivik for his terrorist acts in Norway. The organisation, due to its “irredentist” ideology (which emphasises the need to reclaim former Hungarian territories), also has a history of provoking conflicts with authorities in neighbouring countries.

**New Hungarian Guard** (*Új Magyar Gárda*) is one of the organisations that succeeded the Hungarian Guard Movement, which was founded by Jobbik in 2007 and subsequently dissolved by the Budapest Tribunal in 2009. The proclaimed aim of the movement is the physical, spiritual and mental self-defence of the Hungarians. Similar to its predecessor, the New Hungarian Guard is a paramilitary organisation. The Guard was Jobbik’s most efficient instrument for mobilisation and recruitment, and it was one of the main factors behind its growth and success. The black and white uniform featuring Árpád-stripes<sup>6</sup> worn by its members has led many to draw comparisons with World War II-era party militia. The movement – together with the rest of



**The Hungarian Guard** (*Magyar Gárda*) was established in 2007 as a uniformed, police-type organisation. Though formally founded as a separate institution, the Guard was set up by Jobbik under the leadership of Party Chairman Gábor Vona. Among its proclaimed goals was the desire to show uniformed strength in those areas with allegedly high rates of petty crime where the police were absent or hard to reach. Its political purpose was most likely to signal to the rural population that Jobbik was taking its concerns regarding crime seriously, and that it would be willing to resort to radical measures to address them. They marched in municipalities with high Roma population against ‘Gypsy crime’.

The Guard phenomenon is not unique to Hungary but rather represents a form of organisation typical of the far right in Eastern Europe. Eastern European “guards” (other examples are the Bulgarian National Guard, or the Slovakian Brotherhood) share the following features:

- Paramilitary-type organisations evoking the militaristic and fascistic traditions of the far right (before and during World War II);
- Policy built primarily on anti-Roma prejudice;
- Questioning the state’s law-enforcement monopoly;
- Closely tied to party politics (they are created by parties and play a major role in party building)

In 2009, the cultural association that was officially the home of the Guard was dissolved by the Budapest Metropolitan Court, though the organisation continued to work under the name “New Hungarian Guard Movement”. Now the Hungarian Guard is a panoply of organisations with similar ideologies.<sup>7</sup>

the offshoots of the dissolved Magyar Gárda – has gained popularity by spreading anti-Roma views and promising public security. According to its founding declaration, the organisation is willing to be the spine and a part of the National Guard, which is yet to be established. The greatest risk posed by the organisation (with some other successor movements of Hungarian Guard such as the For a Better Future Civic Guard Association) is that they openly question and challenge the state’s monopoly on violence, and organise marches in areas with large Roma populations to ‘defend’ the majority.

## The current state of data on right-wing extremism

In Central and Eastern Europe, data collection on hate crimes has tended to be poor. This is due to the fact that these crimes are not always classified by the police or the authorities as having been ethnically or politically motivated. These crimes are also very likely to be under-reported because of the reluctance of some victim groups (especially the Roma) to turn to the police when they occur, due to lack of trust in the authorities. Hungary is no exception to this trend –



official data on right-wing extremist acts is almost totally unreliable. NGO tracking of right-wing extremist violence is also sporadic. The Athena Institute<sup>8</sup> have a database that is collecting statistics on hate crimes, but only has figures for the 2009-2011 period. According to the Institute's statistics, of the known hate crimes in Hungary in 2011 (29 cases), 55 per cent were motivated by racism, 24 per cent by anti-Semitism, and 10 per cent by homophobia.

## Potential for growth or decline

Since 2006, there has been a significant growth in the popularity of extreme right-wing media, especially online. One of the key characteristics of the Hungarian extreme right scene is a vast, mostly internet-based media empire. Some of these are openly fascist or neo-Nazi portals, but these are generally less popular than more moderate sites. Although there is only one website that is explicitly tied to Jobbik (*barikad.hu*), a number are sympathetic to Jobbik. At least one (*kuruc.info*) is maintained anonymously by Jobbik activists, and is extremely popular even though its content and tone is sometimes blatantly racist. There is also an extreme right web-based radio station, *Szent Korona Rádió* (Holy Crown Radio), which ranks highly among online radio stations. This significant media presence and the effective use of social media and the internet can be also seen in the Facebook support of the party. Jobbik has more online supporters than any other party (almost 50,000 in a country of 10 million), and has more supporters than the two biggest governmental parties, MSZP and Fidesz altogether.<sup>9</sup>

Political Capital's Demand for Right Wing Extremism Index (DEREX)<sup>10</sup> has indicated that the

social receptivity to prejudiced, anti-establishment rhetoric and politics has risen dramatically since 2002. Going forward, Jobbik may remain a solid medium-sized far-right party with an extremist wing, which either maintains its significant levels of support or becomes even stronger as a result of its bastions in the north east. Jobbik also seems likely to increase its influence over Hungarian politics and discourse, especially on the Roma issue.

Recently, there has been a concerted effort on the part of Jobbik leaders to decrease the influence of the most extreme elements and allies of the party in order to improve their chances of becoming a governmental party in the next term (possibly in coalition with the current government party, Fidesz). However, it remains to be seen what impact this will have. While this sidelining of some of the more extreme elements of the party could decrease the threat of violent extremism in Hungary, it might also alienate some extreme and violent elements of the far-right that are currently under the influence of Jobbik (such as *Hatvannégy Vármegye* or *Betyársereg*, the successors of Hungarian Guard). If these groups become increasingly disconnected from the formal political system, there is a chance that they might start resorting to violence and regarding the use of terrorism as a viable way of achieving their political goals against the democratic system.



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2. Hungarists are the ideological followers of Ferenc Szálasi, the leader of the Hungarian (Nazi-like) Arrow Cross movement before and during World War II.
3. Based on myths about the origins of the Hungarian nation.
4. <http://www.ipmd.sk/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/loved-and-hated1.pdf>
5. The Treaty of Trianon was the peace agreement signed in 1920 between the Allies of World War I and Hungary, which delimited (and greatly reduced) the boundaries of the Hungarian state.
6. The Árpád stripes, the symbol of the historical Árpád dynasty that essentially established Hungary over a thousand years ago, became the symbol of far-right movements because the Arrow Cross movement (a Nazi-like movement in Hungary) used it extensively.
7. Source: Jamie Bartlett, Jonathan Birdwell, Péter Krekó, Jack Benfield, Gabor Gyori: *Populism in Europe - Hungary*. Demos, 2012.
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# THE NETHERLANDS

Rob Witte

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In the public discourse dominating the Netherlands after 1945, anti-Semitism and racism – two of the basic elements of (“classical”) right-wing extremism – have tended to be seen as uncharacteristic of Dutch society.<sup>1</sup> According to many experts, this is attributed to Dutch experiences in the Second World War, as the Netherlands saw the largest percentage of national Jewish populations in Europe killed, after Poland. A guilt complex related to Dutch behaviour during the War has led to what is often called “the basic consensus” on what is “bad” and “good” in Dutch society. This basic consensus has even been called a fundamental mentality of post-War Dutch society, and has seemingly left no place for anti-Semitism or racism. Those who have challenged this consensus have been confronted by massive resistance and criticism from the media,<sup>2</sup> and any attempts to promote right-wing extremist causes have tended to be linked with Nazism and thus suppressed immediately – by the public, politically and judicially. However, despite this public self-awareness, right-wing extremist activities, as well as anti-Semitic and racist incidents, have nonetheless occurred in the immediate post-War period and since then.

## Right-wing extremism during and after the Second World War

On 17 September 1944 the Dutch government in exile signed the “Resolution Concerning the Dissolution of Treasonous Organisations”, which

decreed that at least 30 organisations pursuing fascist aims were to be dissolved. This Resolution also implemented a ban against any future organisations pursuing the same demands.<sup>3</sup>

After the War, many collaborators were detained, prosecuted and punished. If punishment did not come through judicial procedures, then it often did so through the enormous difficulties of adjusting to society and finding jobs. Many managed to “disappear” and integrate into society. However, some collaborators held to their political ideologies and, for example, built small organisations with the intention of helping and assisting fellow-collaborators. These organisations, for example the Foundation of Former Political Delinquents (*Stichting Oud Politieke Delinquenten*), were eschewed by society from the early post-War years onwards.

Those promoting fascist ideologies and activities after the War were challenged by strong anti-fascist tendencies in Dutch society. This resistance posed a major threat to right-wing extremist actors, who were immediately discredited and criminalised if they were identified as fascists.<sup>4</sup> The situation led to a dilemma for right-wing extremists: on the one hand, criminalisation, prosecution and bans posed a major threat to their mobilisation; on the other hand, adjusting their strategies and ideologies would risk leading to loss of support. The dilemma pushed many right-wing extremist actors to pursue different so-called “front and back stage” strategies. At the “front



stage” level, these actors distanced themselves and their outward appearances from “Old Fascism” and Nazism. At the “back stage”, however, they remained steadfast to extreme ideologies to assure their supporters of their right-wing extremism.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, right-wing extremist organisations tended to focus on providing welfare and other support for their “colleagues,” and minimised their public appearances. However, some actors started to develop stronger public profiles for themselves politically. In 1953 a number of individuals, including former members of the SS, established the National European Social Movement (*Nationaal Europese Sociale Beweging*, NESB).

In 1955, NESB was banned. Van Donselaar calls this ban an important “watershed” in Dutch history, because it showed that there was no place in Dutch politics for a Nazi political party, but also demonstrated that not every form of right-wing extremist organisation was banned.<sup>6</sup> National Socialists were allowed to organise themselves, for example in coteries, as long as they did not mobilise as a political party. This, however, led to internal conflicts within right-wing extremist organisations, between those wanting to stay out of the political arena and those wanting to enter it. Some of the latter tried to do so by infiltrating “similar” political parties, such as the Farmers’ Party (*Boerenpartij*, BP).

These developments highlight the need for further research on the relationship between right-wing extremism and political parties, focusing on personal ties and connections, rather than solely focusing on the organisational level.<sup>7</sup>

## Right-wing extremism in the 1970s: Increasingly political and public

In 1971 the political party the Dutch People’s Union (*Nederlandse VolksUnie*, NVU) was established. Former members of the pre-War National Socialist Movement (*Nationaal-Socialistische Beweging*, NSB) played an important role in the party’s formation.<sup>8</sup> Though this party was characterised as right-wing extremist, it was not so much because of its personal ties with collaborators, as because of the openly fascist profiles of the youth involved in the party, those without unsavoury pasts related to the War. Contrary to right-wing extremist organisations that preceded it, the focus of the NVU was not so much focused on (but did not exclude) revisionism or the denial of War-related issues, but more on the contemporary state of the country, especially the presence of ethnic minorities. Their presence was perceived through a racist ideology and was associated with all kinds of social, socio-economic and political problems. At various times during the 1970s, there were moves to ban the NVU through judicial procedures, but all these attempts failed.

Van Donselaar states that the former approach of bans to counter right-wing extremism in the Netherlands seemed to vanish over the years. Instead, more “liberal” approaches began to dominate regarding party bans, allowing a wider scope of expression in the name of freedom of speech, democracy and tolerance (“tolerate the intolerant”). However, contrary to this development, the pressure to ban racial discrimination in Dutch society strengthened.<sup>9</sup> This latter development was in line with the signing of the UN International



Declaration to ban all forms of discrimination, the resolution to establish strong anti-discrimination measures within the Dutch state.<sup>10</sup>

In the 1970s the Netherlands was confronted by various outbursts of social and racial unrest (e.g. Rotterdam in 1972 and Schiedam in 1976) and several terrorist attacks by Moluccan youth, which included train hijackings and the holding of hostages at a public primary school. These incidents led to the birth of so-called “minority policies” at the end of the 1970s, in which measures to improve the social and socio-economic status of ethnic minorities, as well as to reduce discrimination, were central and were developed under the slogan of “integration by retaining one’s own.”<sup>11</sup>

## Right-wing extremism in the 1980s: Increasing support and violence

The early 1980s saw a sharp increase of public support for racist political ideologies, as well as right-wing and racist violence in the Netherlands. One such incident occurred on the night of 29 February 1980, when ten or so supporters of the newly created National Centre Party (*Nationale Centrumpartij*, NCP) left a party meeting and went to the Moses and Aaron Church, in which a group of North Africans were seeking sanctuary. The NCP supporters claimed they wanted “to do what the police failed to do.” However, they did not expect the group would resist them, and fighting broke out. A number of NCP supporters were arrested, and among them were two of the party’s founders. This violent attack and the direct involvement of a

political party attracted much media coverage and led party leaders to decide to ban the party. However, this was immediately followed by the founding of a new right-wing extremist party, the Centre Party (*Centrumpartij*, CP). The CP won a seat in the Dutch Parliament on 9 September 1982, demonstrating the increasing public support for anti-immigrant and anti-multicultural ideologies. The success of the CP in the election was celebrated by supporters roaming the streets of Amsterdam with iron and wooden sticks attacking squatters and ethnic minorities.

On 20 August 1983, a Dutch Antillean boy Kerwin Duinmeijer was stabbed after an argument about racist remarks which were used against him. Duinmeijer died in hospital and the 16-year-old perpetrator justified his act to the police by stating it was “because he is black and dirty - niggers should not look at me that way”. The racist motives for the attack were heavily debated – especially after it was denied in the court verdict that racism was part of the motivation for the violence.<sup>12</sup> However, the murder was generally perceived to be racially motivated and led to an increasing concern about discrimination and racism, as well as right-wing extremist violence in particular. Various anti-racism public activities, as well as policies, were initiated in the early 1980s, including the establishment of local anti-discrimination bureaus. The increasing violence from right-wing extremism ignited responses from right-wing extremist parties as well, for example, an internal report by a CP official defining violence against migrants under “the right for self-defence.” In a court case that followed, violence against migrants was denied as an acceptable form of



“defence.” However, the author and the party were acquitted, because it had been an internal report not meant to be published.<sup>13</sup>

In 1984, the CP disintegrated due to internal conflicts between “radicals” and “moderates”. The CP’s party leader, the “moderate” Janmaat, was expelled from the party and lost his seat in Parliament during the 1986 elections. However, he continued his political work within the newly established Centre Democrats (*Centrumdemocraten*, CD). The other CP faction continued its more radical political work in the Centre Party ’86 (*Centrumpartij ’86*, CP’86).

Before the 1980s, the stigma against right-wing extremists was popularly upheld with reference to their roles during the Second World War. Since the 1980s, however, unsavoury histories from the War were no longer the key element leading to stigma; young right-wing extremists with no Second World War history could be bestowed with a “contaminated identity” in the public eye.

## Right-wing extremism in the 1990s: Election successes

Support among Dutch voters for right-wing extremist parties kept increasing during the 1980s. There were several right-wing extremist parties involved in these elections, which at first meant that no party was able to win enough support nationally for any parliamentary seats. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, however, right-wing extremist support increased enormously, leading to great election successes. In 1989, the CD leader Janmaat gained enough support to return to Parliament, and again in 1994 with three out of 150 parliamentary

seats. In local elections, right-wing extremist groups gained two local seats in 1982, and five seats in 1986. On International Anti-Racism Day, 21 March 1990, there was great shock when both CP’86 and the CD gained 15 council seats in nine of the ten cities in which they competed in the local elections. Four years later, success for right-wing extremists increased so dramatically that right-wing extremist parties gained 87 council seats in total. The shock of this success, however, was less resonant because there had been predictions of even greater success before the election. Election polls even spoke of the birth of a fourth political movement in the Netherlands in those days, besides the already existing longstanding movements of Christian Democrats, Liberals and Social Democrats.

From the 1980s to the 1990s, there was an increase in violent confrontations between right-wing extremists and their opponents. In 1986, this culminated in an arson attack by anti-racists on a hotel in Kedichem, where right-wing extremists had joined together to work through their differences and discuss opportunities to combine strengths. During this attack, Janmaat’s wife and political partner Wil Schuurman was severely wounded and became disabled.

The increase in right-wing extremist support as well as the increase in racist and/or right-wing violence<sup>14</sup> also led state authorities to build up the judicial pressure on known right-wing extremists in relation to discrimination and hate speech. On 4 May 1994<sup>15</sup> the CD party, including Janmaat himself and his partner and MP Schuurman, were convicted for incitement of racial hatred and discrimination. This conviction meant that for the first time, leading members of a Dutch party had been convicted on the basis of their official party propaganda; and for the first time a



Dutch political party had been convicted for racism.<sup>16</sup> The increasing judicial pressure against and criminalisation of right-wing extremist parties and actors led to increasing internal struggles within these movements. Although the 1994 local election results were a major success for these parties, they increasingly had difficulty keeping these seats filled.<sup>17</sup> Conflicts over ideology and communication of these parties increased. These internal issues led to splits within the parties. In 1997, for instance, CP'86 split into different factions, including the People's Nationalists Netherlands (*VolksNationalisten Nederland*, VNN). In 1998, the VNN merged into the New National Party (*Nieuwe Nationale Partij*, NNP), which limited itself to the area of Rotterdam after a series of election defeats, but with little success. The year 1998 is known as “the Waterloo year of the politically active extreme right”,<sup>18</sup> because in parliamentary elections that year the extreme right lost every seat. In local elections that year, seats held by right-wing extremists dropped from 87 to two.

At the turn of the century, the political playing field was effectively a “no-go area” for right-wing extremists. The challenges of maintaining front and back stage strategies, the internal struggles within and between various extreme right parties, and the increased judicial pressure from the state had all had devastating effects on the extreme right.

However, in the early 1990s, the public and political discourse on migration, integration, minorities and Islam changed rapidly. Anti-immigration and anti-Islam arguments and slogans were increasingly visible within the political establishment. In the late 1990s, and more so during the early 2000s, voters harbouring these kinds of sentiments were no longer exclusively met with right-wing extremist propaganda, but could turn to “well-established

parties” to satisfy these ideologies, without any connection to anti-Semitism, fascism or Nazism. In 2002, many voters expressing these sentiments voted for the party Pim Fortuyn List (*Lijst Pim Fortuyn*, LPF), which won one third of the votes in Rotterdam, as well as 26 seats in the Dutch Parliament. This election success occurred just one and a half weeks after the assassination of its leader.

Right-wing extremism was essentially confined to the field of closed, hidden organisations, and extra-parliamentary activities, such as street demonstrations and online mobilisation. In 1996, the public debate on right-wing extremist demonstrations shifted. Prior to this, extreme right demonstrations were banned if possible, both out of fear of public disorder, and out of a desire to protect the public from hate speech. By 1996, however, an emphasis on the right to demonstrate began to prevail in the light of the earlier mentioned shift in dominant political discourse, with more emphasis on the freedom of speech. Since then, demonstrations by right-wing extremist movements have become an accepted expression of this right.

## Right-wing extremism in the 2000s

In the mid-1990s, the NVU was renewed by its former leader Joop Glimmerveen, accompanied by Eite Homan and Constant Kusters. The NVU went on to organise several demonstrations over the course of the next decade, which led to the growth of its support base.<sup>19</sup> In 2004, the movement established its own youth organisation, the Germanic Youth (*Germaanse Jeugd*, GJ). Homan took over the Action Front National Socialists (*Actiefront Nationaal Socialisten*, ANS), established in 1987, which later became the Racial Volunteer Force, imitating the



British group, Combat 18. In recent years, their extreme anti-Semitism was apparent during joint demonstrations that they held with Islamist radicals in the summer of 2006 against Israel's policies, as well as at the International Quds Day at the end of Ramadan.<sup>20</sup>

In terms of the organisations and actors promoting “classical right-wing extremism”, the past twelve years have given rise to a range of more obscure Dutch cases. Blood & Honour, which was established in 1987 mirroring the British group and which disappeared for many years, re-emerged in 2000 and is today very much alive in the Netherlands. *Stormfront*<sup>21</sup> was started in 2000 by two former NVU-members. In 2002, the National Alliance (*Nationale Alliantie*, NA) was set up by two former, but expelled members of the NNP (Teijn and Kapic). The NA was set up in opposition to a range of social and political issues, such as street prostitution, mosques, asylum seekers, and the European Union.

The *Racism and Extremism Monitor*, a project set up by the Anne Frank House, reported increasing anti-Semitism among the NA and other right-wing extremist organisations. It has also noted changing attitudes in these organisations towards the use of violence. For example, various members and cadres were involved in violent incidents, and the NA continued to support one party activist who had been tried for an arson attack on a mosque: “Despite the fact that Ben has been sentenced for 30 months imprisonment, we stand for his innocence...Ben has become the victim of a witch hunt by the Dutch state against national thinkers. Ben has been used by the state as a scapegoat. But anything is possible in a state in which even judges and prosecutors seem to have

paedophile tendencies”.<sup>22</sup> This is a case that right-wing extremist groups in the past would have been hesitant to support, so as not to endanger their front stage appearance.

In the early 2000s, a new phenomenon developed in Dutch right-wing extremism – the “Lonsdale Youth”. The Lonsdale Youth did not consist of well-organised groups, with a coherent political or ideological strategy, but may be considered a loose network of youth groups. These groups were often involved in violent attacks on migrants and minorities in the Netherlands. It was in the aftermath of the murder of film and television maker and columnist Theo van Gogh (on 2 November 2004) that the Lonsdale Youth were brought to the attention of the public, media and authorities, as they were involved in a string of violent incidents.<sup>23</sup>

In 2005, the National Secret Service (*Algemene Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst*, AIVD) published a report on the Lonsdale Youth, stating that individuals involved were unjustly portrayed by media and authorities to be right-wing extremists, but that no such organisational or ideological background was proven to exist. The AIVD also stated that these individuals had been unjustly labelled as “racist”, given that there had been no evidence that they acted through ideational beliefs of biological inferiority.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, various critics have pointed out the limited definitions of right-wing extremism and racism used by the AIVD.<sup>25</sup>

From 2005 to 2006, spin-offs of the Lonsdale Youth appeared across the Netherlands, with a variety of local or regional groups claiming to have been inspired by right-wing extremism. These included United Netherlands Aryan Brotherhood (*Verenigd*



*Nederland Arisch Broederschap*) in South East Netherlands, Action Front (*Aktiefront Zuid Holland Zuid*) in the South part of the South Holland province, Young Resistance Brabant (*Jong Verzet Brabant*) and Soetermeer Skinhead Front in the city of Zoetermeer, which later turned into Youth Storm Netherlands (*Jeugd Storm Nederland*) and eventually into National Socialist Action (*Nationaal-Socialistische Aktie*, NSA).

## The right-wing extremist landscape in 2012: Less organised, but still alive

In 2012, the Dutch landscape of right-wing extremism can be characterised as having moved away from the political stage, but it is still alive and kicking. Right-wing extremist activities within the political arena, like those that developed from 1970 to the 1990s, have largely vanished. However, their appearances “on the streets,” both in terms of violent incidents and demonstrations, have increased. The prevention or banning of demonstrations is rarely discussed within the Netherlands today, as it had been from the 1970s through to the early 1990s. The general assessment of Dutch right-wing extremism today is that there are several hundred radicals or

extremists, surrounded by several thousand youth, whose organisational ties and ideological depth are to be questioned. However, regardless of these ties and this ideological depth, these youth groups and individuals are known to be responsible for a significant number of incidents of racist violence and harassment (see Tables 1 and 2).

The AIVD<sup>26</sup> states in a 2010 report that there has been a decrease in the numbers of “Extreme Right” supporters, which the AIVD characterises as groups with xenophobic or nationalistic ideas, who aim to achieve their goals through democratic means. There has also been a decrease in “right-wing extremism,” which AIVD characterises by their anti-democratic goals and undemocratic means, in the Netherlands. The estimated number of right-wing extremists in 2007 was around 600 people. In 2010 this number decreased to approximately 300, due to internal factions and splits. The AIVD has expressed concerns about the development of right-wing extremism into terrorism, stating that “among right-wing extremists there exists a fascination for weapons and some forms of violence are glorified. The AIVD, however, does not have evidence to indicate that weapons are collected to be used in violent acts or to realise right-wing extremist goals”.<sup>27</sup> For the short term, the AIVD predicts no upheaval

Table 1. Incidents of right-wing extremist and racist violence in the Netherlands

1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
298	313	345	406	317	264	260	-	291	259	223	216	148

Source: Van Donselaar & Rodrigues, 2010

Table 2. Demonstrations by right-wing extremist organisations in the Netherlands

2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010 <sup>28</sup>
2	3	8	12	7	8	12	29	31	10

Source: Van Donselaar & Rodrigues, 2010



or major incidence of right-wing extremism in the Netherlands. A decrease of the threat may be more likely. However, the AIVD predicts possible upheaval if a leader emerges within Dutch right-wing extremism who is capable of mobilising the “movement” and countering the internal conflicts, struggles and partition.

The 2010 *Racism and Extremism Monitor* confirms AIVD’s perspective. According to the *Monitor*, one of the reasons for the decreasing numbers of supporters of right-wing extremism is the recent lack of expansion of these movements among youth audiences. In previous years, right-wing extremist expansion was led by recruitment through the Lonsdale Youth, “but with the disappearance of this main youth trend, there is a decreased flow of young people towards right-wing extremist organisations”.<sup>29</sup> The *Monitor* understands the decreasing number of right-wing extremist supporters to be related to the decrease in violent right-wing extremist incidents. However, according to the *Monitor*, this may be due to the professionalisation of some right-wing extremist organisations, which has led them to stay out of blatant fighting and violence.

## Remaining challenges

As mentioned, the mainstream Dutch political arena has been characterised by significant changes in the dominant discourses on some topics over the last 20 years. These topics, such as tough approaches and criticism of migration, integration, and ethnic minorities, had typically been the “playground” for right-wing extremist parties since the early 1970s. Often such political views and statements were connected to “classical” right-wing ideologies

expressing racist, anti-Semitic, undemocratic and/or authoritarian points of view. Since the mid-1990s however, well-established mainstream political parties with no connection to “classical” right-wing extremism started to incorporate anti-immigration, xenophobic, and assimilative slogans and policies into their party propaganda, particularly tougher positions on the presence of Islam in the Netherlands. Mainstream party programmes have drawn an assumed relation between Islam and the Islamic background of certain minority groups and various social and socio-economic problems in the Netherlands.

The emergence of Pim Fortuyn from 2001 to 2002 cannot be characterised as the entrance of right-wing extremism into the centre of the mainstream political arena. Fortuyn’s anti-immigration and anti-Islam propaganda did attract a lot of voters with right-wing extremist views and sentiments. However, a study by *Racism and Extremism Monitor* concluded that Fortuyn’s party and programme could not be characterised as right-wing extremist, nor could it be called racist.<sup>30</sup>

However, similar assessments of the slogans and ideology of Geert Wilders’ Freedom Party (*Partij Voor de Vrijheid*, PVV) have reached different conclusions. Debates are still ongoing in the Netherlands as to whether or not this party should be labelled right-wing extremist. The 2010 Monitor argues that the PVV is right-wing extremist, as do several other leading experts.<sup>31</sup> Although “classical right-wing extremist” anti-Semitism surely is not present in the PVV programme, the party may well be characterised as “modern right-wing extremism” on various other grounds, including its xenophobic, Islamophobic, and undemocratic character.<sup>32</sup> Of course, modern right-wing extremist party officials



do not tend to propagate violence (openly). However, some of their proposed restrictions and policies can hardly be put into practice without any form of violence. The question remains as to whether or not a party or individual has to propagate violence openly to be perceived as a right-wing extremist. Or can we characterise right-wing extremists as those whose propagation of restrictive policies towards specific visible minority groups, and portrayal of these groups as posing a major threat, contributes to a climate in which others gain the motives and justification to act violently?

## Conclusion

After the Second World War, right-wing extremism in the Netherlands consisted of people and views strongly connected to the War, particularly former collaborators. Since political activities by these groups were not permitted, they tended to organise themselves into coteries, officially focusing on providing assistance to “former colleagues”. Ideologically, the focus of these groups was mainly directed towards revisionism and denying experiences during the War. In the early 1970s, right-wing extremists began to organise politically, but still with strong personal ties to “collaborators.” However, the political ideologies of these groups increasingly moved towards a criticism of immigration and the multicultural Dutch society. Involvement of right-wing extremist political actors, and in some cases right-wing extremist political organisations, with violent incidents has been proven. The early 1980s showed an increase in racist violence incidents, also of those involving right-wing extremist perpetrators. The dilemma between front and backstage actions began to shape the way right-wing extremist

organisations operated, leading to internal struggles and conflicts.

Meanwhile, within the changing social and political atmosphere in the Netherlands, support for right-wing extremist parties increased enormously, leading to some election success. In the 1990s, this trend of successes for right-wing extremist parties also led to increased repression of these parties. However, by the late 1990s, a number of issues formerly claimed by right-wing extremists had entered the mainstream political establishment, which gave voters the opportunity to support these views without the unsavoury connection with right-wing extremism. This resulted in several defeats for right-wing extremist parties, and they essentially vanished from the political playing field.

In the 2000s, Dutch “classical” right-wing extremism was largely limited to organisations active at the “street level,” involving both demonstrations and violent incidents. Today, these movements are estimated to consist of some hundred activists at the core, surrounded by several thousand youth, though their organisational and ideological affiliation with right-wing extremism is questionable. There are signs of increasing anti-Semitism amongst these movements, as well as changing attitudes towards violence, along with the persistence of xenophobic and racist views and behaviour. The 2000s have also seen the development of “modern right-wing extremism,” active within the political arena. Political parties such as the PVV are strongly opposed to anti-Semitism and instead focus on opposition to Islam. Their political statements and slogans tend to be offensive to these communities, including incitements to “expel Islam from the Netherlands and Europe”. Beyond this, they have also argued for



measures that cannot necessarily be executed without any use of violence. Sometimes, their proposed measures were unquestionably of a violent nature, such as a proposal to withdraw the army from Afghanistan to intervene in a small Dutch city which had issues regarding North African youth on the streets, or a proposal to allow the police to shoot North African football hooligans in the knees. The

Dutch coalition government from 2010 to 2012 could only have been brought to power with the official support of the “modern” right-wing extremist Freedom Party, led by Geert Wilders.

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3. Ibid., p.10.
4. Ibid., p.16.
5. Ibid., pp.16-17.
6. Ibid., p.217.
7. For more information on the work of KAFKA in relation to Dutch right-wing extremism (see [www.kafka.nl](http://www.kafka.nl)). See <http://www.searchlightmagazine.com> for more information on similar work in the UK by Searchlight.
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20. International Quds Day is an annual event that began in Iran in 1979, that is commemorated on the last Friday of Ramadan, expressing solidarity with the Palestinian people and opposing Zionism as well as Israel's occupation of East and control of Jerusalem. Quds is the city's Arabic name.
21. *Stormfront* is one of the oldest right-wing extremist websites, originating from the United States (1995), which saw its Dutch version appear as a web forum, Stormfront Nederland, in 2000. The participants express their orientation towards national-socialism a great deal and often express their illegal utterances and propaganda.
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23. See: Donselaar, J. van (2005) *Monitor Racisme en Extremisme. Het Lonsdalevraagstuk*, Amsterdam/Leiden: Anne Frank Foundation/Social and Behavioural Sciences University of Leiden; Algemene Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst AIVD (2005)



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## NORWAY

*Anders Ravik Jupskås*

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In recent years, right-wing extremism has been fragmented and to a large extent unorganised in Norway. So far, there have been very few successful public demonstrations, and – with the major exception of the lethal terrorist attack by Anders Behring Breivik on 22 July 2011 – very little violent behaviour from extreme right activists. Moreover, extreme right parties are by and large an electoral failure. However, the internet and social media (most notably Facebook) seem to function as recruiting and cultivating platforms for a growing array of Islamophobic groups. Furthermore, attitudes associated with extreme right ideology (e.g. anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, extreme nationalism and xenophobia, and profound hostility towards parliamentary democracy and political parties) are still present in contemporary Norway, though they are relatively marginal when compared to other European countries.

The data in this report comes from a number of sources, but most notably from various newspapers, the extreme right parties' and groups' Facebook and web pages, the non-governmental organisations the Norwegian Centre against Racism (*Antirasistisk senter*) and *Vepsen* and reports from the police and the Norwegian Police Security Service.

### The history of right-wing extremism

Right-wing extremism – defined here as violent or undemocratic right-wing forces – has always been relatively weak in Norway, particularly when compared to neighbouring states, notably Sweden. As noted by Hagtvet and Dahl in an overview chapter on Norwegian right-wing extremism, “its presence has nearly always been marginal”.<sup>1</sup> Historically, we are able to distinguish between four phases of extreme right mobilisation throughout the 20th Century.<sup>2</sup> These phases differ in terms of support for the extreme right, its influence, ideology and tactics.

The **first phase** developed during the turn of the century and lasted into the late 1920s. This period saw the emergence of political groupings with fascist tendencies, which to some extent were inspired by fascist movements in Italy. Their growth had later been interpreted as a reaction against the relatively radical labour movement, the Norwegian state's financial problems and hostility towards the functioning of the Norwegian democracy in general and the constantly shifting minority government in particular. One of the groups advocating such ideas was The Fatherland's League (*Fedrelandslaget*), in which Anders Lange, the founder of today's Progress Party (*Fremskrittspartiet*, FrP), started his political career as an organisational secretary. The League's direct influence was limited, and the unexpected



death of its leading figure in 1930 marked the end of the group's aspirations.

The **second phase** developed in the early 1930s, and was characterised by the rise of organised fascism. A variety of groups – most notably the National Unity Party (*Nasjonal Samling*, NS) led by Vidkun Quisling<sup>3</sup> – were inspired by the rise of Nazism in Germany, though anti-Semitism did not play a significant role in their early years. In 1935 however, the NS adopted more of the anti-Semitic propaganda that had been flourishing in continental Europe. Electorally, the party was initially a huge failure. However, the **third phase** of the extreme right saw the party gain power as a consequence of Germany's occupation of Norway during the Second World War. Although the occupational forces originally tried to collaborate with the Fatherland's League, Quisling had a special relationship with Hitler, which allowed him to become Head of State in occupied Norway from 1 February 1942 until 9 May 1945. In this period, the typical marginality of Norwegian fascism was somewhat challenged, as 55,000 Norwegians joined the ranks of NS. According to Hagtvet and Dahl, "one might say that the particular problems of Norwegian fascism were due to the power of NS during those years".<sup>4</sup> However, far-right collaboration with the Germans made it impossible for movements to mobilise on extreme right or even nationalist ideologies in the post-war period.

Consequently, the **fourth phase** failed to emerge before the 1970s, with the formation of neo-Nazi parties. In the late 70s, a party called the Norwegian Front (*Norsk Front*), which was later renamed to the National People's Party tried to run for election, but after being denied electoral success in 1977, it turned

into a more violent extra-parliamentary group. After bombing a mosque in Oslo in 1985 - among other violent attacks - the party's core leadership of 12-15 activists were arrested. The party officially dissolved in 1991. However, this did not signal the end of extreme right-wing activity. Rather, the 1990's saw a rise in activity from similar movements. Not only did Norway foster a more active neo-Nazi subculture<sup>5</sup> during this decade, with groups such as the Boot Boys,<sup>6</sup> Djerv, and Viking (the latter may have had as many as 100 members), there were also a number of political parties, including The Fatherland's Party (*Fedrelandspartiet*) and the White Election Alliance (*Hvit Valgallianse*) which unsuccessfully ran for election. Until the recent rise in Islamophobic groups and the atrocities of 22 July 22, the extreme right milieu has tended not to be a key issue for the media and public debate.

## Characteristics of the contemporary extreme right

Contemporary right-wing extremism in Norway can be described in three distinct ideological currents, although there might be overlap between activists and ideologies in practice. Firstly, there are groups and failed parties directly or indirectly linked to neo-Nazism. Secondly, there are racist and slightly more successful anti-immigrant parties and movements that are somewhat more active but less militant. Thirdly, there are the emerging Islamophobic groups, which are heavily inspired by similar movements elsewhere in Europe.

The three types of right-wing extremist mobilisation set out here resemble the distinctions made by both governmental and non-governmental institutions in



Norway. The Norwegian Centre against Racism (*Antirasistisk senter*) distinguishes between neo-Nazi groups, racist and extreme right parties and Islamophobic groups in its 2011 annual report.<sup>7</sup> *Vepsen*, another non-governmental organisation monitoring the far right, distinguishes between traditional anti-immigrant groups and parties, anti-Semitism, websites and “think tanks” promoting Islam-hatred and a group labelled “Nordic warriors” (most of these groups are categorised as neo-Nazi-inspired groups in this report).<sup>8</sup> Finally, the Norwegian Police Security Service operates with a more narrow definition of extremism, in which adherence to violence is a necessary condition, while making a crude distinction between traditional right-wing extremism and emerging anti-Islamic groups.<sup>9</sup>

## Neo-Nazi parties and groups

Among the more Nazi-inspired or anti-Semitic groups, Norway has, in recent years, witnessed the emergence of several small movements. However, today these are all truly marginal, if active at all. *Vigrid*, a sectarian cultish group mixing Nazism (and anti-Semitism in particular) with Norse mythology, was founded by the semi-charismatic leader Tore Tvedt in 1998. The group’s website contains statements such as, “Vigrid’s struggle is the struggle for these 14 words: We should ensure the existence of our people and a future for our White children.” The group also presents speeches by the Nazi collaborator Quisling. In 2006, Tvedt was convicted for violation of the Norwegian hate speech laws (§135a of the Norwegian Penal Code) and sentenced to 45 days in jail following a remark that Jews were “evil murderers” and “parasites which will be cleaned out” in an interview in 2003.<sup>10</sup> After 22 July, Tvedt

was one of few public figures who denied dissociating himself from the acts of Behring Breivik.<sup>11</sup> Although Tvedt announced his retirement in 2009 after Vigrid received only 174 votes in the 2009 national election,<sup>12</sup> there is ongoing activity on the group’s web page, and a new party was even launched in August 2012.<sup>13</sup> The nameless party presents itself as the continuation of Quisling and his National Unity party.

Another party ideologically similar to Vigrid is The Norwegian Patriots (*Norgespatriotene*, NP), founded in 2007 by a former member of Vigrid (and of FrP before that), Øyvind Heian. In 2008, Heian received some publicity after nominating the liberal editor Martine Aurdal as “Traitor of the Year” in response to Aurdal’s weekly magazine *Ny Tid* nominating Kohinoor Nordberg as “Norwegian of the Year”.<sup>14</sup> In December 2007, the party also handed out several leaflets in a medium-size Norwegian city, Hønefoss, showing a drawing of a person from an ethnic minority labelled “Wanted for rape”.<sup>15</sup> The leaflet also described Norway as an “Eldorado for non-western rapists”. In 2007, Heian was sentenced to eight months in jail for death threats against the former Minister of Justice, Knut Storberget, and was again convicted for threatening two police officers in 2008.<sup>16</sup> Even though NP tried to downplay some of the Nazi references when running for election in 2009, it turned out to be electorally unsuccessful, gaining only 184 votes. As a consequence, the group has shut down all party activity, at least for the time being.<sup>17</sup>

The Norwegian Resistance Movement (*Norsk motstandsbevegelse*) is yet another more traditional extreme right group. The group is a spin-off from its more organised counterpart in Sweden, which is seen as belonging to groups inspired by revolutionary



anti-Semitic “The Order” in the United States.<sup>18</sup> The group is thus far miniscule in Norway, but is actively recruiting in at least three cities. Its activities mainly consist of handing out leaflets, in which the group says it is against immigration and the “corrupt political class”. However, the group has also had one public demonstration in 2012, making it the first neo-Nazi demonstration in Norway since the Hess march in 2000. However, while the Hess march attracted around 50 participants predominantly associated with the Norwegian neo-Nazi group Boot Boys, most of the participants came from Sweden, demonstrating a lack of supply of right-wing extremist activists in Norway.

The last group, which belongs to a more traditional extreme right subculture, is Slavic Union. This revisionist and militant group is originally from Russia, but it appears to be attempting to create a network with extreme right activists in Norway. At least one extreme nationalist activist claimed to have been in contact with a militant Russian representative from the group.<sup>19</sup> Allegedly, Behring Breivik also had contact with some activists from Russia.<sup>20</sup> The Norwegian Police Security Service also reported that there had been contact between Norwegian and Russian extremists in 2011.<sup>21</sup>

Even though groups promoting anti-Semitism remain marginal in Norway, anti-Semitic public attitudes are still significant. A recent survey conducted by The Center for Studies of Holocaust and Religious Minorities (*HL-senteret*) confirms that “stereotypical notions of Jewish people do exist in Norwegian society”.<sup>22</sup> More specifically, the survey reveals that 12.5 per cent of the population do harbour prejudices against the Jewish population. The reported levels of anti-Semitism are less

widespread compared with many other European countries, and similar to countries like the UK, the Netherlands and other Scandinavian countries. This survey also measures anti-Semitism through analysing negative perceptions of, and social distance to, Jewish people. A total of 9.7 per cent of respondents felt antipathy toward Jewish people and 8 per cent did not want Jewish people as their neighbours or in their circle of friends. Researchers indicated that there had been a (well-known) pattern to xenophobic attitudes: they were more prevalent among men, the elderly, and the less educated.

## Extreme anti-immigrant parties and groups

The Democrats in Norway (*Demokratene i Norge*) – or simply just the Democrats – was established in 2002 as a splinter party from FrP, and there has been subsequent overlap between the leadership of both groups. However, the party also allegedly attracted former members of other mainstream political parties. Ideologically, the party sits somewhere between the radical right and the extreme right. As noted by Sultan and Steen, the Democrats are located at the “point of intersection between extreme nationalism, xenophobia and Islamophobia”.<sup>23</sup> Its manifesto is not particularly extreme, but some of the statements from key representatives romanticise violence and/or are blatantly racist. Politically, the party focuses on four topics listed on their web page: crime, education, immigration and health care.<sup>24</sup> The party has not been particularly successful electorally, but it was nevertheless able to field candidates in 17 out of 19 counties and received 0.3 per cent of the vote in 2011.



The Democrats are significantly more xenophobic than other parties, and are also much more distrustful of mainstream political parties. Several of the Democrats' activists have also displayed militant and undemocratic ideas. In the local elections of 2011, one prominent member and mayoral candidate from the party was caught on tape arguing that it would be nice to kill government representatives: "It would indeed be a pleasure to kneel him down, bend his head forward, place the Glock in the pit of the neck and pull the trigger".<sup>25</sup> Another prominent member has presented similar arguments, referring to Labour politicians as traitors and, perhaps somewhat paradoxically, Quislings. At party meetings, representatives have acted out or "played war" with one another, setting out some to be Muslims and others to be non-Muslims.<sup>26</sup> Many of the candidates running for local elections have former ties to xenophobic and/or more militant groups from the 1990s.<sup>27</sup>

In addition to the Democrats, there are several smaller anti-immigration and extreme nationalist groups and parties operating in Norway. The biggest group is The People's Movement against Immigration (*Folkebevegelsen mot innvandring*), which claims to be a "cross-political information organisation which works to stop mass immigration from foreign cultures into Norway". This group has a long history in Norwegian politics, but its heyday was from 1987-1991.<sup>28</sup> Today it consists of a small group of activists who carry out small-scale activities (e.g. putting up posters and stickers, and leafleting) across Norway. An even smaller group – or party, as the founder calls it – is named the Norwegian People's Party (*Norsk Folkeparti*). The party is led by Oddbjørn Jonstad, a former FrP politician who was expelled in 1999 due to racist statements about immigrants. Though the Norwegian People's Party

is currently unable to run for elections, Jonstad contributes to the extreme right-wing scene in Norway by maintaining a website ([korsfarer.no](http://korsfarer.no)) in which he lists all of the so-called "traitors" of the country, including the Crown Prince, prominent academics, politicians, priests and others.<sup>29</sup> Jonstad published the first traitor list in 2008, but as a so-called "Judas" list.<sup>30</sup>

## Islamophobic movements

The most prominent and visible form of extreme right mobilisation in recent years has been the emergence of Islamophobic groups, such as the English-inspired Norwegian Defence League (NDL) and the Norwegian version of Stop Islamization of Europe, namely Stop Islamization of Norway (*Stopp islamiseringen av Norge*, SIAN). These groups may attract extreme right-wingers, but their political agenda is very much "single issue" driven. Islam is depicted as the external enemy and the establishment (e.g. parties, media and academia) as the internal enemy. Both groups use "war rhetoric" filled with references to the resistance movement during the Second World War. Though NDL and SIAN are the two most visible Islamophobic groups in Norway - having attempted to organise numerous public demonstrations since early 2011 - they seem to be more or less incapable of attracting significant numbers of activists.

So far, SIAN has carried out the largest extreme right public demonstration since the Rudolf Hess March in Askim in 2000. The size of these marches remains small in a European comparison; while SIAN was able to mobilise 32 people on 11 September 2011 in support of the United States ten years after 9/11, the Hess March gathered 38 people. When NDL had its



Table 1: Norwegian extreme right groups and parties, and their Facebook, Youtube, Internet and mainstream media presence

Group/Party	"Likes" on Facebook*	Videos on YouTube**	Relatively professional webpage	Webpage updated	Media visibility in 2011***	Media visibility in 2012****
Stop Islamization of Norway	10,045	8	Yes ( <a href="http://www.sian.no/">http://www.sian.no/</a> )	Daily	80 (164)	93 (196)
Norwegian Defence League	2,431	38	No ( <a href="http://norwegiandl.info/">http://norwegiandl.info/</a> )	Irregularly, but several times a month	87 (171)	120 (233)
The Democrats	376	11	Yes ( <a href="http://www.demokratene.no/">http://www.demokratene.no/</a> )	Daily	28 (150) <sup>o</sup>	n/a
The People's Movement Against Immigration	216	3	Yes ( <a href="http://www.fmi.as/">http://www.fmi.as/</a> )	Close to daily	7 (21)	10 (37)
The Norwegian Patriots	2	0	No longer exists	-	10 (15)	3 (5)
Norwegian Resistance Movement/Nordfront <sup>oo</sup>	n/a	n/a	Yes ( <a href="http://www.nordfront.net/">http://www.nordfront.net/</a> )	Irregularly, but several times a month	0 (4)	15 (29)
Norwegian People's Party	n/a	1	No ( <a href="http://www.webkontorene.no/Parti.html">http://www.webkontorene.no/Parti.html</a> )	No	2 (7)	4 (5)
Vigrid	n/a	17	No ( <a href="http://www.vigridtvedt.net/">http://www.vigridtvedt.net/</a> )	Irregularly, but still active	24 (58)	66 (119)

#### Notes

\* Members on Facebook are registered on 17 November 2012.

\*\* Number of videos about or referring to the group/party, 26 November 2012. The numbers for Vigrid refer to the combination of Vigrid and the leader Tvedt.

\*\*\* The search for hits is restricted to the News Agency Bureau (NTB), the two largest tabloids VG and Dagbladet, the four largest regional newspapers, Aftenposten, Bergens Tidende, Adresseavisen and Stavanger Aftenblad. It covers the period from 1 January to 31 December. Number of hits in all registered media in parenthesis.

\*\*\*\* The search for hits is restricted to the News Agency Bureau (NTB), the two largest tabloids VG and Dagbladet, the four largest regional newspapers, Aftenposten, Bergens Tidende, Adresseavisen and Stavanger Aftenblad. It covers the period from 1 January to 26 November. Number of hits in all registered media in parenthesis.

<sup>o</sup> In order to separate this party from articles about the Democrats in the US, the party leader Vidar Kleppe is added to the search string. The party has been particularly visible in the large regional newspaper, Fædrelandsvennen, in the southern part of Norway. 57 of the total hits are from this newspaper. Since Kleppe is no longer the leader it is hard to easily estimate the number of hits in 2012.

<sup>oo</sup> The media search is restricted to "Nordfront" since "Norsk motstandbevegelse" refers to the resistance against the Germans during the Second World War.



first demonstration in Oslo on 9 April 2011, fewer than 10 people participated. Not even a joint NDL-SIAN demonstration in June 2012 in Norway's fourth largest city, Stavanger, attracted more than about 35 people to take part. In other words, these groups seem predominantly to exist as virtual networks, operating almost exclusively online and via social media, though it should be noted that both groups have attempted to create local branches.<sup>31</sup> For instance, as of November 2012, approximately 2,400 people are members of NDL's Facebook page, and as many as 10,000 people are members of SIAN's Facebook page. These numbers indicate that it is not only small obscure sectarian movements that are receptive to the propaganda produced by these groups. Moreover, the number of Facebook members for NDL is increasing rapidly, as it has grown from 300 "members" in February 2011, 1,000 just before 22 July, and to 1,500 in March 2012.

Islamophobic attitudes are also more widespread than anti-Semitism in Norwegian society. Surveys show that about one quarter of the adult population believes there are too many Muslims in the country and that Islam poses a threat to Norwegian culture. As usual, men are more sceptical of Islam than women, and those with less education are more sceptical than those with higher education. However, from a European perspective, Norway appears to be more tolerant on these issues than other countries. In Germany and the UK, for instance, twice as many respondents believe there are too many Muslims in their country, and in Hungary the figures are three times higher.<sup>32</sup>

It should additionally be noted that Norway has small sectarian Christian parties, such as the Christian Unity party (*Kristen Samlingsparti*) and

the Christians (*De Kristne*). These parties may not be categorised strictly as extreme right, but they do advocate rather hostile policies towards immigration and Muslims in particular and more authoritarian policies generally.

## Incidents, arrests and convictions

The right-wing extremist terrorist attack and the trial against the perpetrator, Anders Behring Breivik are by far the most important incidents related to the extreme right in 2011 and 2012. On 22 July 2011, a bomb went off in the Government quarter in the centre of Oslo, and a few hours later a cruel massacre of politically engaged youth began at the Workers' Youth League (*Arbeidernes Ungdomsfylking*, AUF) summer camp on Utøya. In Oslo, eight people lost their lives and about 30 were wounded, while 69 people were brutally shot dead and 66 others wounded on Utøya. Contrary to what many experts and commentators expected, the perpetrator turned out to be an ethnic Norwegian named Anders Behring Breivik. He was a former member of FrP and FrP's youth organisation, but since 2007 had stopped paying his membership fees. Breivik was also quite active on several right-wing oriented websites (e.g. the Nazi-inspired web page stormfront.org; the immigration-sceptical page called document.no; and the liberal-conservative site Minerva.as), and he participated at least once in a demonstration held by the English Defence League.

During his trial, Behring Breivik argued that the bomb and the massacre were a "preventive attack to protect the indigenous population of Norway", and his compendium *2083: A European Declaration of*



*Independence* consists of text partly lifted from a right-wing think tank in the US and other Islamophobic activists such as the Norwegian blogger Fjordman, and partly written by himself. Contemporary Europe is described by Breivik with headlines such as “Jihad destroys the Swedish model”, “Islamisation and cowardice in Scandinavia”, “Will the Netherlands survive the 21st Century?”, “The Spanish and the Portuguese – once and future dhimmis?” and “Collusion between British government and Muslim terrorists”. There are many well-known extreme right-wing ideas here including that an external enemy is taking over Europe, and that the European states, as we know them now, will soon be history. There is a need to act quickly as the “internal enemy” – politically correct elites in politics, the media and academia – are doing their best to cover up the social developments that are “really” taking place. The “resistance” requires extra efforts and self-sacrifice because the fight is being fought on “two fronts”, against both the external and the internal enemy. The fact that Breivik describes his deeds as “cruel, but necessary” is also an expression of a classic right-wing extremist mentality.<sup>33</sup>

As already described, the new Islamophobic organisations – NDL and SIAN – tried to carry out a number of public demonstrations in 2011. In March 2012, they were joined by another extreme right group. Twenty-five extreme right activists from the Swedish Resistance Movement (*Svenska Motståndsrörelsen*) and the Norwegian Resistance Movement (*Den norske motstandsbevegelsen*, NRM) respectively were arrested for fighting with anti-racists in Trondheim, Norway’s third largest city. This latter group, NRM, was also involved in a public fight when around 15 left-wing extremists

(associated with the group called *Blitz*) attacked a Christmas dinner held by approximately 30 neo-Nazis in Oslo on 24 November.<sup>34</sup>

In July 2012, the police arrested an extreme right-wing and anti-feminist blogger named Eivind Berge for encouraging or glorifying criminal acts on his blog, which was made illegal through the Norwegian Penal Code (§140).<sup>35</sup> On his blog, Berge had written that “Attacks on police are 100% in harmony with everything I stand for” and “I maintain that police killings are both ethically and tactically correct”. According to website statistics his blog has been visited 13,638 times since it was established in 2006. However, after the Supreme Court announced in August that the blogosphere is not to be regarded as public space, the police decided to drop the charges against Berge.

Apart from these three cases, very little is known about the relationship between the extreme right groups and hate crime. Since 2007 the Norwegian Police has started to publish statistics on hate crimes, but so far it is unknown whether the perpetrators are connected to far-right groups or whether the violence is unorganised and committed by individuals without extreme right motivations. Moreover, much of the hate crime in Norway is not reported at all. While surveys in 2008, 2009 and 2010 carried out by the Norwegian police shows that 2 per cent of the population says they have been exposed to hate crimes (attacks based on religious beliefs, skin colour, ethnicity, nationality or sexual orientation), less than one third are reported to the police.<sup>36</sup> According to the Norwegian Police Security Service, the events of 22 July 2011 have, at least thus far, not increased the threat from extreme right milieus.<sup>37</sup>



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# POLAND

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## The history of right-wing extremism

The history of contemporary right-wing extremism in Poland goes back to the 1920s and 1930s. In 1922, a right-wing extremist assassinated the first President of Poland, Gabriel Narutowicz, who had been elected with the support of the left and national minorities. The right-wing nationalist (National Democrat) movement led by Roman Dmowski became increasingly influenced by the radical model of anti-democratic and fascist movements which appeared in other European countries. Anti-Semitism in particular became a key element of the radicalised version of the nationalist political identity. The nationalists enjoyed support from the Catholic Church and were particularly active among the young, for example through the student organisation All-Polish Youth (*Młodzież Wszechpolska*, MW). A more radical splinter group appeared in 1934: the National-Radical Camp (*Oboz Narodowo-Radykalny*, ONR). This was banned by the Polish authorities, but it continued its activities and gained some support, especially among youth.

During World War II, the majority of the radical nationalists were simultaneously anti-German and anti-Soviet. Although anti-Jewish pogroms took place in some Polish towns (such as in Jedwabne in 1941), the organised extreme right generally did not collaborate with the Nazis during the German occupation, which helped its reputation in the decades that followed.

Some former members of the ONR were allowed to continue their political activity throughout the communist period (in the form of the Catholic Association *PAX*), and the communist regime occasionally resorted to anti-Semitic propaganda itself (disguised in crude “anti-Zionist” rhetoric). In 1968 this resulted in a wave of emigration of several thousand Jews who had been living in Poland.

Since the early 1990s there has been a clear resurgence of the extreme nationalist movement in Poland. A large number of radical groups appeared on the scene at this time, recruiting members from the violent skinhead subculture. The most notable of these extremist groups has been the National Rebirth of Poland (*Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski*, NOP) which adopted a “national-revolutionary” position. The racist rock music scene developed in Poland in the 1990s, while Polish football stadiums became places where neo-Nazi symbols were commonplace and extreme-right groups often recruited hooligans into their ranks.

## Characteristics of the contemporary extreme right

The Polish extreme right is characterised by a strongly anti-Semitic ideology which has persisted in spite of the fact that the number of Jews living in Poland today is very small (approximately 10,000 in a country with 38 million inhabitants). Nevertheless, anti-Semitic discourse remains widespread. The



hostility to real or imagined Jews allegedly ruling Poland is emblematic of a more general hostility to diversity and liberal democracy.

Since the early 2000s, aggressive homophobic statements and activities have become another feature of the extreme right discourse in Poland. The violent opposition to gay rights has allowed the Polish far right to find allies across the broader spectrum of conservative political opinion. Other groups that have been singled out by the far-right include the Roma and other ethnic minorities, Muslims and other religious minorities, migrants, political opponents including members of feminist and anti-racist groups, and youth subcultures which are deemed “foreign” (such as reggae music fans). This hostility to various “enemy groups” is frequently accompanied by violence.

A distinguishing ideological feature of many extreme right groups in Poland is their self-professed devotion to a fundamentalist version of Roman Catholicism which is promoted, among others, by Radio Maryja, a mass-audience Catholic radio station which often airs anti-Semitic and xenophobic content. On a number of occasions, Radio Maryja and its leader, Father Tadeusz Rydzyk, have openly endorsed the activities of extreme right groups. Over the years, Rydzyk has built a large social movement and a media conglomerate including its own TV station and a daily newspaper.

Two main contemporary extreme right groups have laid claim to the traditions and ideology of the 1930s radical nationalist groups by adopting their names: the National-Radical Camp (ONR) and the All-Polish Youth (MW). The MW was re-formed by Roman Giertych in 1989 and the current-day ONR was re-established by skinhead activists in the early

2000s. Originally, the MW and ONR represented slightly different versions of the nationalist ideology (the ONR being more radical than the MW), but recently both groups have joined forces through common activities aimed at an “overthrow of the system”.

Each of them has a core activist base estimated at several hundred people (no detailed figures are available), but their mobilising potential is much larger. The annual Independence Day march in Warsaw on 11 November 2012, organised by the ONR and the MW, attracted numerous other right-wing groups, football fans from across Poland and far-right activists from several other countries, with at least 20,000 participants. The creation of a new organisation, the National Movement (*Ruch Narodowy*, RN) was announced by the ONR and MW leaders on that occasion. The RN is a political movement which is expected to transform itself into a political party. It is widely believed to be modelled on the Hungarian extreme-right party Jobbik, and its newly-formed strong-arm squad, the Independence Guard (*Straz Niepodleglosci*), is modelled on Jobbik's paramilitary wing, the Hungarian Guard.

The National Rebirth of Poland (NOP) led by Adam Gmurczyk, remains a key rival to the ONR-MW alliance among the most radical elements of the far-right spectrum. Although ideologically similar, it opposes the newly-formed RN, competing for support among nationalist-minded youth. The NOP enjoys support among skinhead groups and some football supporters, especially in Wroclaw where it organises its own annual march on 11 November (in 2012 it attracted some 5,000 participants). The NOP is strongly connected with international extremist networks such as Roberto Fiore's European National Front (formerly the International Third Position). It



also maintains friendly relations with the Ukrainian *Svoboda* party. The NOP creed includes a particular emphasis on Holocaust denial, and it has promoted publications such as “The Turner Diaries”, popular among violent right-wing extremists internationally. Its membership is estimated at several hundred hard-core activists.

In addition to the NOP, there are several other smaller and/or local groups active in Poland, including cells of the international neo-Nazi networks, Blood & Honour and Combat 18. There are also some smaller fringe groups espousing an anti-Christian, neo-pagan version of the radical nationalist ideology (such as *Niklot* or *Zadruga*).

## Incidents, arrests and convictions

Article 13 of the Polish Constitution (adopted in 1997) states that:

Political parties and other organisations whose programmes are based upon totalitarian methods and the modes of activity of Nazism, fascism and communism, as well as those whose programmes or activities sanction racial or national hatred, the application of violence for the purpose of obtaining power or to influence the State policy, or provide for the secrecy of their own structure or membership, shall be prohibited.

However, the above provision has hardly been used in practice, even in the cases of the most extreme groups. The only instance of a right-wing extremist organisation having been banned for its unlawful activity is the Brzeg branch of the ONR, which was prohibited by a regional court in 2009. In 2011, the Constitutional Court dropped a case brought by a

lower level court on a possible ban against the NOP on procedural grounds.

The penal code includes provisions against hate speech (article 256). Nevertheless, the Polish legal system has frequently been criticised for failing to deal effectively with cases of hate speech and hate crime.

Many of the documented cases of racist abuse have taken place at football grounds. For example, on 26 October 2012, during a top division game between Podbeskidzie Bielsko-Biala and Lechia Gdansk, local supporters directed racist chants at a black player from the visiting team (a Burkina Faso national team player, Abdou Razack Traoré), shouting profanities and “We are a white team”. Due to counter-measures and fines introduced by the Polish Football Association in cooperation with the anti-racist “Never Again” Association, racist and fascist symbols appear in stadiums less frequently than some years ago, but they are still displayed occasionally.

Arrests have usually been made in connection with large-scale riots involving the far right. As a result of violent clashes provoked by radical nationalist and football hooligans before the Poland-Russia game (during the European Football Championship) on 12 June 2012, approximately 200 people were detained, 59 perpetrators were sentenced within a week, including 18 prison sentences, with some other cases taking more time. One hundred and seventy-four right-wing extremists were detained by the police during clashes accompanying the 11 November 2012 far-right demonstration in Warsaw, when 22 policemen were injured (see above).

In a recent publicised case of a potentially deadly plot by a small extreme right cell, on 20 November 2012 the authorities revealed that a few weeks earlier they



had arrested a 45-year-old chemistry professor from Krakow who planned to detonate 4 tonnes of explosives during a session of the Polish Parliament, with the aim of killing the President and other key figures. The suspect was known to hold right-wing extremist and anti-Semitic views and he was allegedly inspired by the example of killings committed by Anders Breivik in Norway in 2011 and by Timothy McVeigh in Oklahoma City in 1995.

According to this register, the first ten months of 2012 saw a 30 per cent increase in the number of recorded cases compared to a similar period in the previous year, with several hundred cases noted each year. Since the early 1990s, 62 murders have been documented as committed by members or sympathisers of right-wing extremist groups in Poland.

## The current state of data on right-wing extremism

State institutions publish a very limited amount of data on right-wing extremist activity and hate crime. As such, the vast majority of available data on the subject comes from civil society organisations such as the “Never Again” Association which publishes the *Brown Book*,<sup>1</sup> the most extensive register of racist incidents and other xenophobic crimes committed in Poland. Since 1994 “Never Again” has produced a regular publication in the form of *Nigdy Wiecej* (“Never Again”) magazine, providing information and analysis on hate crime and on extremist and racist groups operating in Poland. Recent statistics are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Far-right hate crime cases registered in “Brown Book”

Year	Recorded crimes
2009	234
2010	264
2011	306
2012 (to October)	305

Source: “Never Again” Association, 2012

1. See <http://www.nigdywiecej.org/brunatna-ksiega> for more details.



# SLOVAKIA

Peter Učec

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According to Cas Mudde, there are four major anti-system challenges to contemporary democracy: political radicalism, political extremism, religious fundamentalism, and terrorism.<sup>1</sup> In the case of Slovakia, (populist) **radical right** groups have not been a direct source of violence. **Religious fundamentalism** – whether on the violent Salafist or Christian ends of the spectrum – has not posed a tangible threat to civic peace either. Meanwhile, there has only been one recent suspected act of **terrorism** in Slovakia, and as yet there is no information about the possible ideological component of the alleged perpetrator's motivations.

This report will therefore focus on **right-wing extremism**, typically in the form of *racially-motivated violence (or its encouragement)*. The perpetrators of this type of violence are generally found among racist skinhead and other groups influenced by race-based or neo-Nazi political convictions. The new generation of the populist radical right in Slovakia, which is divided into a number of competing factions, will be briefly discussed in the section dealing with the prospect for future development of right-wing extremism in Slovakia.

In possible contradiction with mainstream opinion, this report does not consider parties such as French *Front National* (FN), the Sweden Democrats (SD) or the Slovak National Party (SNS) to be extremist. These are radical right parties which challenge some aspects of liberal democracy, namely the constitutional protection of minorities, and are ideologically driven

by a combination of nativism, authoritarianism and populism. Extremists, by contrast, reject the very idea of democracy as a legitimate principle of organising political societies.<sup>2</sup> Thus, they are more likely to regard violence as a desirable, or at least acceptable, means of achieving their goals.

## The history of right-wing extremism

In the 1990s, the main right-wing extremist movements in Slovakia were racist skinhead groups. The first decade of the 21st Century witnessed their stagnation, and a shift towards ideas of “free” or “autonomous” nationalism that have become popular among German neo-Nazi groups in recent years.

There has been a limited amount of convergence between these groups, with some from within the skinhead movements joining with the “autonomous” nationalists in parties that seek to participate in the electoral process: these include the Slovak Togetherness – National Party (SP-NS) and later, after its ban, the People's Party – Our Slovakia (LS-NS) political parties. Paradoxically, these parties tried hard to maintain the image of conformity with the constitution and, judged on strictly ideological terms, they were and are not extremist parties of the neo-Nazi kind.<sup>3</sup>

Table 1 maps the Slovak far right, showing organisations and groups that either espouse ideologies which potentially facilitate violence or that directly



commit violent – and primarily racially motivated – acts. The highlighted organisations are either *indirectly* (those in bold italics) or **directly** (those in bold) linked to the execution and incitement of violence.

## Incidents, arrests and convictions

It is frequently assumed that most perpetrators of racially motivated violence share the racist ideologies of existing extremist organisations, but are not

usually members of them.<sup>4</sup> The other assumption is that most of this kind of violence is spontaneous rather than premeditated.<sup>5</sup> However, a brief look at the situation in Slovakia presents a different picture, and highlights instead the prevalence of premeditated offences that are carried out by active members of extremist organisations. This can only be decided by the expert judgement of practitioners from the organisations monitoring extremist groups, as the official statistics are not very helpful in this respect (see below).

Table 1: Slovak Far Right as a (Potential) Source of Politically Motivated Violence

### Right-Wing Radicalism and Extremism: Actors, Structures, Ideologies

Organisational form	Ideology	
	Ultrationalism <sup>6</sup>	National socialism (neo-Nazi) and White Power movements
Political parties	Slovak National Party (SNS) Christian People's Party (KĽS) People's Party (ĽS) Slovak National Unity (SNJ) Slovak People's Party (SĽS) <i>Slovak Togetherness – National Party (SP-NS)</i> <i>People's Party – Our Slovakia (ĽS-NS)</i>	<i>No formally registered parties</i>
Registered civil society organisations	<i>Slovak Togetherness (SP)</i> New Free Slovakia (NSS) Slovak renaissance Movement (HSO) Slovak Youth Union (JSM)	<i>No formally registered groups</i>
Unregistered groups	National Guard (NS)	<i>Racist skinheads:</i> <b>Blood and Honour</b> <b>Slovakia Hammer Skins</b> <b>Rebel Klan Engerau</b>  <i>Leaderless resistance groups:</i> <i>Autonomous Nationalists (AN)</i> <i>National Resistance (NO)</i>

Key: Organisations in bold italics are *indirectly* linked to the execution and incitement of violence. Organisations in bold are **directly** linked to violence.

Note: **Football hooligans** are not included in this table; their connection to radical and extremist groups is assumed – for good reason – but the motivations of hooligan groups are not considered to be primarily political or ideological in nature.

Source: Based on data from Mikušovič (2009, 45-60)<sup>7</sup> and Milo (2005)<sup>8</sup>



Regarding general trends in extremist violence which we are able to identify, in the 1990s the country witnessed a series of racially motivated attacks which were treated by the police as “ordinary” - though serious - violence. There was no legislation providing for stricter treatment of the perpetrators of this violence, or for more severe punishments in cases of extremist or racially motivated violence. The most notorious incident during this era was the 1995 Molotov cocktail attack by a group of extremists on a “Roma pub” in Žiar na Hronom, which resulted in the death of a young Roma named Mário Goral. A similar attack took place in 2008, when extremists entered the home of a Roma family in Žilina and killed Anastázia Balážová, a mother of eight. While the prosecution of the Balážová case took place in a legal framework equipped with special legislation for racially motivated criminal acts, both cases ended with relatively lenient sentences – seven years of prison time – which were a disappointment to many.

Other recent incidents that have had a significant impact on both public perceptions and state policies were the cases of Daniel Tupý and Hedviga Malinová. In 2005, a student named Daniel Tupý was stabbed to death in an attack on a group of “anarchists” by a group of thugs. It soon came to be regarded as an act of extremist, ideologically motivated violence (or as “close contact” fight training for criminal gang members). The two suspects were identified as members of a criminal gang and the neo-Nazi organisation *Rebel Klan Engerau*. However, they were absolved by the court in the midst of an organised crime-sponsored online campaign offering financial compensation to anybody capable of providing an alibi or information suggesting extenuating circumstances for the accused. The case has never been solved and has recently been filed.

In 2006, a student named Hedviga Malinová reported being beaten by two “skinhead types” after they overheard her speaking Hungarian on the phone. Based on her description, two activists of the National Resistance in Nitra were singled out as possible perpetrators, but were never convicted of the offence. The Malinová case has been important because she was treated by the state in a way which many considered to be an effort to undermine her public trustworthiness, with the Minister of Interior and senior police officials suggesting that she might have made up the incident in order to avoid a university exam. Her perceived harassment by the state has mobilised civil society organisations on the issue of her defence since then<sup>9</sup> and has contributed to the state’s recent commitment to take further steps to promote “militant democracy” while fighting extremism.<sup>10</sup>

Over the course of the last decade there has been a measurable shift in official state policy towards extremism and extremist violence.<sup>11</sup> Pressure had been building to reform the Penal Code to respond to extremism and to dedicate more attention and state resources to addressing this problem. In 2006 the government therefore produced the first concept paper setting out its approach to tackling extremism. A second, improved and updated version has been approved in 2012. While Slovak state officials have chosen not to articulate a legal definition of extremism (and use “internal” definitions that the Interior Ministry apply on a case-by-case basis instead), the language of the Penal Code was amended in 2009 to reflect some of the discussions that had been taking place on this issue.

Extremism is still not defined as a special criminal offence, but new provisions have been made to



address the problem of expression of extremist views. Extremism has been designated a potential motivation for violent acts (namely racially motivated murders), the notion of the “extremist group” has been introduced, and the legislation provides for stricter sentences in case of offences with extremist motivation. The latest development in 2011-2012 is a declaration by the government of its intention to further tighten the space for extremists and to amend the relevant legislation accordingly.

## The current state of data on right-wing extremism

In addition to some limited academic research and monitoring by civil society organisations (such as People Against Racism), several state organisations keep data pertaining to the incidence and activities of extremists in the country. The most complete of these are official police statistics, although there are certain methodological problems related to their accuracy and interpretation of the aggregate data they publish. They derive from the logic of the police work and reporting as well as from the state of the existing legislation.

First of all, from the published data it is extremely difficult to distinguish between racially motivated and other ideologically motivated types of extremist crime. Also, as the data does not distinguish between actual acts of violence and expressions of extremist opinion (such as wearing neo-Nazi symbols and using extremist propaganda materials) it is problematic identifying different types of crime. Finally, in terms of the actual acts of violence, most of it is believed to have been committed by football hooligans, since this is also classified as an extremist crime.<sup>12</sup> The following data should therefore be viewed with the caveat that the recent increase in extremist crime is to a great degree a result of the more specific and inclusive legislation, and that the incidence of these acts from the 1990s is likely to have been gravely under-reported.

To date, the government has primarily drawn on the expertise of the faculty of the Police Academy of the Slovak Republic in developing its policies on far-right extremism. Only recently has research originating elsewhere and based on hard data appeared in the form of research reports covering various aspects of public opinion pertaining to the topic of extremism (see – Open Society Foundation, *Nadácia otvorenej spoločnosti* 2012).<sup>13</sup>

Table 2: Incidences of Criminal Offence Motivated by Racial, Ethnic and Other Kinds of Intolerance

1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
8	3	19	21	15	35	40	109	119
2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012*
79	121	188	155	213	132	156	243	78

Notes: \*Data for 2012 covers only the first half of the year.

Source: Official press releases of the Police Presidium of the Slovak Republic.



## Future trends

Slovakia's racist skinheads have been declining in numbers for some time now; their dynamics have often been influenced by generational changes and by the attractiveness of new incarnations of neo-Nazism, namely Autonomous Nationalism, which has spread to Slovakia from Germany through the Czech Republic. It is likely that they will continue to constitute a threat and stable source of racially motivated violence.

However, they might be overtaken by – or incorporated into – the rising phenomenon of the People's Party – Our Slovakia (LS-NS). This is the political wing of Slovak Togetherness (SP), a traditional nationalist civic association which has been strikingly open to the ideas and cadres traditionally associated with the anti-systemic extremism of the German neo-Nazi movements.<sup>14</sup> The fact that many observers openly describe it as an extremist organisation, in spite of its “official” ideology being “merely” of the radical right type, suggests that we may be encountering a hybrid or a new form of anti-systemic radicalism in the region.

LS-NS shares this ambiguous character with groups such as Jobbik in Hungary and the Workers' Party for Social Justice (DSSS) in the Czech Republic. Similarly, it shares with them a fondness for a uniformed guard-like volunteer corps and a public loathing of the “Gypsy problem”. It uses this to appeal to the wider public, particularly in those areas where there are large Roma populations. This also represents a common ground on which LS-NS can

legitimately – by their standards – join forces with the neo-Nazi groups of the leaderless resistance. In general, the term “resistance” – against the oppressive system and mainly “Gypsy crime” – has acquired prominence in the party's propaganda. It features prominently in public marches organised by SP and LS-NS to express solidarity with “native” populations and individuals who allegedly or actually suffer from the cohabitation with “asocial” Roma populations and resulting “Gypsy crime”.

The ever-increasing number of these public events and the growing level of contestation involved increases the probability of an escalation of violence, be it in the form of confrontation with the police, the enraged Roma, or radical activists of anti-racist organisations (such as ANTIFA). In addition, the general encouragement – and justification via “Gypsy crime” – of radical right-wing action by confused and angry youth, along with increasing legitimisation of neo-Nazism, represents another potential source of violence motivated by far-right extremist ideologies.



## Endnotes and bibliography

1. This is not meant to be a typology of violent political actors, nor of right-wing extremism, but simply an empirical listing of the possible and most obvious sources of politically motivated violence. Source: Mudde, Cas (2006) *Anti-System Politics*, in: Heywood, Paul M.; Jones, Erick; Rhodes, Martin; Sedelmeier, Ulrich, *Developments in European Politics*, Basingstoke/New York, Palgrave Macmillan.
2. Mudde, Cas (2007) *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*, Cambridge University Press.
3. They were, by their own definition, anti-systemic, although they were vague on the exact meaning of this. Their programme propagated replacement of parliamentary democracy with a corporatist state, which led to the ban of SP-NS and later also SP by the Ministry of the Interior. While ideologically tending towards populist radical right views, they are carefully and selectively supportive of other forms of radical action which are usually considered characteristic of more extremist groups.
4. Mudde, Cas (2006) *Anti-System Politics*, in: Heywood, Paul M.; Jones, Erick; Rhodes, Martin; Sedelmeier, Ulrich, *Developments in European Politics*, Basingstoke/New York, Palgrave Macmillan. p. 182, referring to the results of other research.
5. "Most nativist violence is committed by young men, under the influence of alcohol, who have no clear ties to extreme-right organisations. Extreme-right terrorism is rare, particularly compared to the 1990s, and seems fairly well policed," concluded Mudde regarding the European Situation. Source: Mudde, Cas (2012) *The Relationship Between Immigration and Nativism in Europe and North America*, Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute.
6. In spite of including the remnants of various historic Slovak nationalist traditions, this is primarily a mixture of nativism and authoritarianism typical of the European (populist) radical right.
7. Mikušovič, Dušan (2009) *Militantná demokracia na Slovensku? Teoretické a praktické problémy aplikácie v slovenskom prostredí* [Militant Democracy in Slovakia? Theoretical and Practical Issues with its Application in Slovakia], MA Thesis, Masaryk University Brno.
8. Milo, Daniel (2005) *Rasistický extrémizmus v Slovenskej Republike: Neonacisti, ich hnutia a ciele* [Racist Extremism in Slovakia: Neo-Nazis, their Movements and Goals], Bratislava, Ľudia proti rasizmu.
9. The case has never been closed and even in 2012 the Office of the Public Prosecutor suggested that Malinová be placed in the psychiatric clinic in order to assess her mental state.
10. So far the only two acts of the militant democracy doctrine has been the ban of the Slovak Togetherness – Our Slovakia party in 2006 by the Ministry of the Interior on charges of an effort to supersede parliamentary democracy by a corporatist state. Two years later the Ministry also banned the civic association Slovak Togetherness on identical charges, but the ban was overruled by the court.
11. *Koncepcia boja proti extrémizmu na roky 2011-2014* [Conception of the Fight Against Extremism 2011-2014] <http://www.minv.sk/?extremizmus&subor=21265>
12. The fact that Trnava – the home of the Spartak football club with the infamously radical fan base – has been singled out as the region with the highest incidence of extremism seems to support this conjecture.
13. *Verejná mienka v oblasti pravicového extrémizmu* [Public Opinion in the Area of Right-Wing Extremism], (2012) Bratislava: CVEK – Centrum pre výskum etnicity a kultúry & Nadácia otvorenej spoločnosti, [http://www.cvek.sk/uploaded/files/vyskumna\\_sprava.pdf](http://www.cvek.sk/uploaded/files/vyskumna_sprava.pdf)
14. The relationship between the radical nationalists, from LS-NS and SP to the neo-Nazi cadres, has been developing. While in the mid-2000s SP tried to sever the bonds, recently it seems to be much more open to such influence. Given the lack of insider information, it is not easy to distinguish whether it is a premeditated strategy (on the part of both sides) or the result of the activities of individuals



# SWEDEN

*Anders Ravik Jupskås*

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The extreme right subculture in Sweden consists of both extra-parliamentary organisations and political parties, and also exists online through various websites. As with the extreme right elsewhere, the Swedish extreme right is well networked with similar groups in other countries. The most common activities of these groups include lecture and study circles, combat training, and distribution of propaganda, sometimes through organising concerts and other public-facing activities. The overall trend in recent years seems to be characterised by a general decline in the extreme right – both in terms of activity and number of active organisations. However, the emergence of social media as a tool for these groups, and their recent adoption of Islamophobic rhetoric, may lead to a new generation of extreme right-wing activists in Sweden.

It has been difficult to estimate the exact size of these groups. However, the numbers of extreme right activists present at two annual events are helpful indicators of their strength and mobilising potential. The first is the so-called “Salem-demonstration”, held annually in Stockholm in December to commemorate the stabbing to death of skinhead Daniel Wretström in 2000 by youths of immigrant background. The second is the “People’s March” on Sweden’s National Day, 6 June. In recent years, these events have attracted around 1,000 activists, and numbers appear to be declining rather than increasing.

In terms of ideology, all extreme right groups see “the establishment” as the internal enemy, most notably elected politicians and mass media, although the emergence of “new” extreme right ideas has created divisions between those who see Muslims and those who see Jews as the main external enemy. However, it is too soon to say how these tensions will affect the strength of extreme right activities. The data in this report come from a number of sources, primarily the Swedish Secret Service, the non-governmental organisation EXPO, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, and extreme right parties’ and groups’ Facebook and web pages.

## History of right-wing extremism

As in Norway and Denmark, extreme right groups failed to gain much ground in Sweden in the inter-war period. There were several active groups and parties during this period, but none obtained more than 1 per cent of the vote in elections. If they gained any seats in the parliament, it was due to splits within mainstream parties which created opportunities for the extreme right.<sup>1</sup> The extreme right in Sweden was discredited after the Second World War, but not to the same extent as in Norway and Denmark, which German forces had occupied for several years. This has given the extreme right-wing subculture in Sweden a larger measure of organisational and



ideological continuity. However, this may also be an explanation for the absence of any successful anti-immigrant party at the national level, since attempts to mobilise on anti-immigrant issues attracted too many extreme right activists, and were not perceived as politically legitimate.<sup>2</sup> In this sense, Sweden differs significantly from its Scandinavian neighbours.

In recent years, the anti-immigrant Sweden Democrats party has been the dominant electoral force on the far-right scene. Though this party has historical roots in neo-Nazi and extreme right subcultures, it has worked hard and to some extent succeeded in becoming a more mainstream populist radical right party.<sup>3</sup> It will therefore not be covered in this report.

## Characteristics of the contemporary extreme right

The contemporary Swedish extreme right subculture is substantial, particularly when compared to neighbouring Norway. While Norway has very few extreme right groups and parties, all of which have been unsuccessful in attracting either activists or voters, the extreme right subculture in Sweden is bigger, more complex and changing more rapidly. The Swedish Secret Police have estimated that 845 people have in some way or another been linked to the White Power extreme right milieu from 1999 to 2009.<sup>4</sup> However, the number is much higher if we include everyone who has participated in various demonstrations or voted for parties on the far right. The number of active groups decreased from 29 in 2010 to 25 in 2011.<sup>5</sup> Six of these recorded groups, however, were new in 2011. At the same time, as

many as 13 previously recorded groups were either inactive or dissolved. In other words, the extreme right scene is shifting quite fast.

This report will primarily focus on the four largest groups and parties: The Swedes' Party (*Svenskarnas parti*, SvP), The Swedish Resistance Movement (*Svensk Motståndsrörelse*, SMR), National Democrats (*Nationaldemokraterna*, ND) and Nordic Youths (*Nordisk Ungdom*, NU). Two parties – SvP and ND – are by far the two most present extreme right groups in the Swedish media (see Table 1). However, given the impact of emerging Islamophobic movements in other countries, the presence of the Swedish Defence League (SDL) will also be discussed briefly. Ideologically, we can distinguish between three main currents: those who adhere to old-school National Socialism, those who embrace extreme nationalism without the strong anti-Semitism and biological racism, and finally the “new” right-wing extremism characterised by Islamophobia. It should be noted, however, that the boundaries between different groups and discourses are not always clear.<sup>6</sup>

Based on data collected by EXPO (and based on the organisations themselves, media reports and other sources), external and internal activities of extreme right organisations may be differentiated.<sup>7</sup> External activities consist of propaganda (e.g. distributing leaflets or posting stickers), public events (e.g. presence in the streets or public squares) and demonstrations. Internal activities consist of social activities (e.g. concerts), lectures given by ideologists and combat preparations (e.g. combat sport training, survival walks in the woods, first aid courses). The idea behind the latter is to prepare for future violent confrontations against “the system”.



## Old-school right-wing extremism: National Socialism and anti-Semitism

SvP was officially founded in 2008, but its predecessor the National Socialist Front (*Nationalsocialistisk front*, NSF) has existed since the 1990s. Today it is the largest group on the Swedish extreme right scene.<sup>8</sup> The transformation from NSF to SvP involved not only a change of name, but also attempts to downplay some of its traditional National Socialist elements. However, both the Swedish Security Service and EXPO see new propaganda from SvP simply as cosmetic change.<sup>9</sup> The party's ideology is still based on traditional National Socialism, including its aim to replace parliamentary democracy with a national-authoritarian system.

SvP is organised more or less as a normal political party, and according to its website, it currently has 51 local branches. After receiving 2.8 per cent of the vote (102 votes) in the small municipality of Grästorps in 2011, the current party leader, Daniel Höglund, gained a seat in the municipal council. However, the party soon lost this seat after it became known that he did not live in the municipality.<sup>10</sup> The party maintains a strong online presence, with almost 1,800 people who “like” the party on Facebook and approximately 240 clips associated with the party on YouTube (see Table 1). SvP's website is quite professional and updated on a daily basis. In recent years, SvP has been the most active extreme right group in Sweden, though overall the level of activity has declined since 2008.<sup>11</sup> Besides spreading propaganda, the party organised many public events, social activities (e.g. organising card games and Christmas dinner) as well as combat preparations in

2011. In August 2011, the party even organised a charity drive, collecting clothes to be donated to the homeless.<sup>12</sup>

The SMR was founded in 1997, and is best described as a militant and revolutionary right-wing organisation aiming to establish a totalitarian government in Sweden. EXPO notes that the party is perhaps more inspired by the US group “The Order” from the 1980s than by traditional National Socialism.<sup>13</sup> The leader, Klas Lund, was also the founder of the group White Aryan Resistance (*Vitt Ariskt Motstånd*), which became the organisational hub of several activists in the 1990s. Lund was formerly convicted for murder (in 1986), armed robbery (in 1991) and maltreatment. In contrast to SvP (and ND, see below), SMR is not an open membership organisation. Instead, individuals must be deemed worthy of membership after demonstrating loyalty to the core ideas of the group.<sup>14</sup> At the local level, the SMR consists of small (combat) cells which consist of at least two militants.<sup>15</sup>

SMR's website is relatively professional and regularly updated (several times a day). Moreover, SMR has been successful in exploiting social media, including YouTube, where the group presents different social activities carried out by the group (e.g. fighting, training and playing games,<sup>16</sup> or survival walks in the woods).<sup>17</sup> A 2007 video clip showing SMR celebrating the National Day boasts nearly 46,000 viewers.<sup>18</sup> On Facebook, however, the group only has 533 members. Though the group has adopted some new methods, the SMR also tends to focus on traditional recruiting and propaganda methods, including disseminating leaflets and public events.<sup>19</sup> In April 2011, SMR demonstrated against a mosque



in Borlänge, carrying a poster stating, “In the past traitors were hanged, today they are in the parliament”.<sup>20</sup> In March 2008, the police found what appeared to be one of the largest numbers of weapons (e.g. a hand grenade, two machine guns, five pistols and revolvers, a rifle, and 10 kg live ammunition and military alarm mines) belonging to an extreme right-wing group found in Sweden in the last decade.<sup>21</sup> These weapons were owned by SMR members in Stockholm.

## Extreme nationalism and ethno-pluralist groups and parties

The ND was established as a splinter party in 2001 after ideological disagreements within the more moderate, yet still radical right party, the Sweden Democrats. The ND, with nine local branches and three elected representatives seated in municipal councils, is the second largest party among extreme nationalists.<sup>22</sup> The party has 2,300 members on its Facebook page, and runs a quite professional website, though not updated as often as that of SvP or SMR. The party’s support has been slowly declining over the last decade, and it has tended to be unsuccessful electorally. In the 2010 general election, the party received only 0.02 per cent (1,141 votes), whereas its share of the vote in 2006 and 2002 were 1,923 and 3,064 respectively.

Ideologically, the party represents an ethno-pluralist vision, adopting an “equal-but-different” doctrine focusing on each nation’s “natural” right to preserve its own native culture. However, as noted by EXPO, there seems to be a difference between the party’s ideology in theory and in practice, and some of its

activities and rhetoric can be characterised as racist.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, in 2003, the ND youth organisation attacked the Gay Pride Parade in Stockholm, showing its violent potential.<sup>24</sup> Stones and bottles were thrown at the participants in the parade, and the festival’s press secretary was badly injured. The most important themes for ND are to end multiculturalism, impose greater law and order, and fight both capitalism and communism. The party believes that Islam, multiculturalism, and such decadence as the Pride parades are incompatible with democracy.<sup>25</sup>

In 2011, ND’s Vice-Chairman, Daniel Spansk, and several other individuals left the party in protest against its autocratic leadership, namely the current leader Marc Abramsson.<sup>26</sup> The party does very little traditional propaganda activities, and only a few public events (9) or talks and seminars (7). Instead, the party devotes much energy to municipal politics and publishing its weekly magazine *Nationell Idag* (National Today). The ND circulated 1,900 copies of each issue of this magazine in 2010 and 1,600 copies of each issue in 2011.<sup>27</sup> The magazine received almost 1.7 million SEK from public support in 2010. This has led to a renewed discussion about the criteria used for deciding whether magazines should receive public funding.<sup>28</sup>

NU was founded in 2009, and the group employs modern methods for its activities, including targeted usage of the internet and unorthodox campaigns.<sup>29</sup> The group has, for instance, carried out public demonstrations in front of individuals and organisations it protests against, such as the human resources director of Stockholm’s metro system.<sup>30</sup> On another occasion, the party criticised the gender perspective taught in a school by sending two dolls



Table 1: Main extreme right organisations in Sweden and their local and virtual presence, 2012

Organisation	Local branches*	Members on Facebook**	Professional web page	Updated	Number of hits on YouTube***
SvP	53	1 759	Yes ( <a href="http://www.svenskarnasparti.se/">http://www.svenskarnasparti.se/</a> )	Daily	238
ND	9	2 302	Yes ( <a href="http://www.nd.se/">http://www.nd.se/</a> )	Only a few times a month	440
SMR	N.A.	533	Yes ( <a href="http://www.nordfront.se/">http://www.nordfront.se/</a> )	Several times daily	308
NU	N.A.	1 569	Yes ( <a href="http://nordiskungdom.se/">http://nordiskungdom.se/</a> )	Regularly	49
SDL	N.A.	4 805	Semi-professional (founded in June 2012) ( <a href="http://swedishdl.info/">http://swedishdl.info/</a> )	Almost daily in the beginning, but not any more	13

Notes

\* Local branches named in the parties' web page, 23-24 November 2012

\*\* According to the various Facebook pages, 23 November 2012

\*\*\* Hits on YouTube is from 23 November 2012

Table 2: Media coverage of main extreme right organisations in Sweden, 2011-2012

Organisation	Media hits 2011*	Media hits 2012**
Svenskarnas Parti (SvP)	51 (293)	37 (412)
Nationaldemokraterna (ND)	60 (252)	64 (302)
Svensk motståndsrörelse (SMR)	9 (121)	25 (285)
Nordisk Ungdom (NU)	20 (79)	9 (25)
Swedish Defence League (SDL)	19 (28)	23 (73)

Notes

\* The number covers all hits in the three largest newspapers – Aftonbladet, Expressen (morning and evening) and Dagens Nyheter – and the national news agency (TT). The number in parenthesis covers all media.

\*\* The number covers all hits in the three largest newspapers – Aftonbladet, Expressen (morning and evening) and Dagens Nyheter – and the national news agency (TT). The number in parenthesis covers all media. 2012 covers only the period 1 January to 24 November.



to explain why men and women are by nature different.<sup>31</sup> It, too, operates a professional and regularly updated website, and attracts members on Facebook, but has not made use of YouTube so far.

In terms of ideology, the group is similar to ND, as it opposes class politics, argues against capitalism and communism, and aims for a “society in which the Swedish people's ethnic and cultural survival is prioritised over everything else”.<sup>32</sup> Among other things, the group helps to distribute ND's weekly magazine described above. Furthermore, the group tries to recruit new members by demonstrating the advantages associated with membership in a nationalist organisation, even promising the possibility of free trips abroad to meet right-wing extremists in other countries.<sup>33</sup>

## Islamophobic movements

In recent years, groups driven by Islamophobia and anti-Muslim sentiment have emerged across Europe. These groups tend to be quite militant and violent, although the degree varies by country. In Sweden, a group called the Swedish Defence League (SDL) has been established, as a spin-off from the English version (the English Defence League, EDL). The organisation is led by Isak Nygren, a former member of the Sweden Democrats who was expelled after stating that he opposed “race mixing” on the White Power online forum called *Nordisk* (Nordic).

The group has a website, which was established in 2011, but it is not updated regularly. However, SDL boasts the most extensive Facebook presence of all extreme right groups in Sweden, with 4,800 “likes” on Facebook. Interestingly, a substantial number of these Facebook users are non-Swedes. However,

Facebook,<sup>34</sup> which also counts direct interactions with the page, shows that most of its 630 most active users are based in Stockholm. SDL is, however, not simply an online movement, and its activists have participated in various public demonstrations in the United Kingdom and in Aarhus, Denmark. In 2011, it became known that several SDL activists had joined an EDL demonstration in England,<sup>35</sup> and SDL's leader joined an international counter-Jihad meeting in Stockholm in August 2012. In-depth journalism uncovered that several of the 30 known activists of SDL were previously convicted for various crimes, and a number of them could be linked to Swedish hooligan groups.<sup>36</sup> In this sense, the SDL is very similar to the EDL in England.

## Incidents, arrests and convictions

Most of the racist, xenophobic or homophobic violence in Sweden is not explicitly linked to organised right-wing extremist groups. However, this is not to say that these groups do not play a role – directly, but also perhaps indirectly. In fact, in 2007 the Swedish Security Police reported that extreme right violence had become more serious in recent years.<sup>37</sup> To determine the link between right-wing extremist organisations and hate crime, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (*Brå*) uses information from victims' reports to the police. The last four years show quite a consistent – though not very strong – link between these groups (see below) and hate crime.

From 2008 to 2011, between 5,000 and 6,000 hate crimes were reported annually.<sup>38</sup> Out of these reported crimes, no more than between 1 per cent (2010) and 4 per cent (2008) can be directly linked to any extreme right group. However, focusing in on



Table 3: Hate crimes in Sweden 2008-2011, and the relationship with extreme right motives and organisations

Year	Total number of hate crimes reported	Total number of hate crimes reported with white power motive	Total number of hate crimes related to right-wing extremist organisations	Percentage related to right-wing extremist organisations	Percentage of White Power hate crime from organised groups	Motive of hate crime coming from extreme right groups	Type of hate crime	Most common group(s) mentioned
2008	5895	695	236	4.0%	34.0%	Xenophobic or racist (73 %)	Vandalism (40 %) hate speech (34 %) and harassment or defamation (27 %)	Folkfronten f.d. Nationalsocialistisk front (NSF) (40 %), and Svenska Motståndsrörelsen/Nationell Ungdom (SMR/NU) (25 %)
2009	5797	555	134	2.3%	24.1%	Xenophobic or racist (92 %)	Vandalism (31%) hate speech (42%) and harassment or defamation (19 %)	Folkfronten (Svenskarnas parti) (43 %) and Svenska Motståndsrörelsen /Nationell Ungdom (SMR/NU) (23 %)
2010	5139	444	50	1.0%	11.2%	Xenophobic or racist (89 %)	Vandalism, harassment or defamation (25%) hate speech (25 %)	Svenska Motståndsrörelsen/Nationell Ungdom (SMR) (31 %) and Svenskarnas Parti (SvP) (20 %)
2011	5493	517	125	2.3%	24.2%	Xenophobic or racist (93 %)	Vandalism (37%) hate speech (39%) and harassment or defamation (13%)	Svenska Motståndsrörelsen/Nationell Ungdom (SMR/ NU) (55 %) and Svenskarnas parti (SvP) (23 %)

Source: Annual reports (i.e. 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012) from Brå – centrum för kunskap om brott och åtgärder mot brott (Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention).



hate crime with White Power motives reveals that a substantial share (between one eighth and one third) of these perpetrators are linked to extreme right organisations, particularly to SvP and SMR. More specifically, almost all of the recorded hate crimes are motivated by general xenophobia<sup>39</sup> (rather than specific forms, such as Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, Christianophobia or homophobia). If we look at the forms hate crimes take, three forms are the most prevalent: vandalism, hate speech, and harassment or defamation.

The two extreme right organisations most often linked to hate crime are SvP and SMR. With the exception of 2010, these two organisations account for about three quarters of the hate crime related to organised groups. However, while SvP used to dominate these statistics in 2008 and 2009, it is now SMR that accounts for most of the hate crime connected to organised groups.

The extreme right in Sweden carried out six relatively large demonstrations in 2011. Some of these were relatively small events that did not attract more than 20 activists, but the demonstration held by ND in Södertälje (where ND is represented on the municipal council) on 1 May 2011 involved around 80 followers. Later the same month, around 120 activists demonstrated against a mosque in Gothenburg, an event organised by Defence Union Sweden's Self-defence<sup>40</sup> (*Försvarskåren Sveriges Självförsvar*) and ND. In December 2011, as a new version of the Salem March, extreme right groups and parties including SvP, ND and NU were gathered in Stockholm under the slogan: "Stop the hostility towards the Swedes" (*Stoppa Svensk-*

*fientligheten*). This march involved 550 people, which demonstrates a decline in numbers since the early 2000s when as many as 2,000 people would participate in such marches. According to the organisers, a similar demonstration will not take place this year.<sup>41</sup>

On 4 August 2012, there was an attempt to launch the Worldwide Counter-Jihad Alliance in Stockholm. More specifically, this initiative was launched by EDL in attempts to recruit and mobilise Islamophobic activists in Sweden.<sup>42</sup> At the meeting, prominent people within the so-called counter-Jihad (better labelled Islamophobic) movement participated (e.g. Pamela Geller and Robert Spencer from the United States, EDL leader Tommy Robinson, and Stop the Islamization of Europe's leader Anders Gravers). However, even with such prominent speakers on the list, the meeting attracted only around 75-80 activists. According to an observer from EXPO, Alex Bengtsson, the activists were predominantly from England and Denmark, and only a handful were from Sweden.<sup>43</sup>

Finally, in November 2012, the Court in Malmö sentenced the racist criminal Peter Mangs to life in prison for two murders, five attempted murders, and vandalism in 2010. All of Mangs' victims were people of immigrant background, and it was revealed that Mangs was inspired by extreme right militia in the US and was deeply convinced by various conspiracy theories.<sup>44</sup>



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# UNITED KINGDOM

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## The history of right-wing extremism: Three distinct waves

Historically, extreme right movements in the United Kingdom have been less successful and less well organised than similar organisations in other European states. At broad level, the post-war period has seen three distinct ‘waves’ of right-wing extremist activity in the UK, with each of these waves represented chiefly by (1) the National Front, (2) the British National Party, and (3) the English Defence League. While these movements are not openly violent, or indeed explicitly “pro-violence”, they have tended to attract citizens who are more likely than average to either engage in violence, or perceive violence or group conflict as justifiable and necessary.

The first wave commenced with the formation of the **National Front (NF)** in 1967, and ended with the party’s failed attempt to achieve a major electoral breakthrough at the general election in 1979. During this period, the NF put strong emphasis on a confrontational strategy of “march-and-grow” that encouraged conflict with opponents and sought to project an image of strength and discipline, as part of a broader attempt to recruit young, working-class men and to be invited into power amidst a period of national crisis. Ideologically, the NF was associated with racial nationalism, which was defined by crude biological racism, anti-Semitism and hostility toward the liberal democratic state.<sup>1</sup> Following the demise of

the National Front, this first wave of activity saw the emergence of the **British National Party (BNP)** in 1982, which remained closely aligned to the NF’s ideology and its street-based, confrontational strategy. While the BNP contested general elections in 1987, 1992 and 1997, throughout this period the party never invested seriously in elections, but instead focused on building an inner core of committed activists, meeting opposition from militant anti-fascists as well as other right-wing extremist groups such as **Combat 18**, and holding rallies that often included the demand for “rights for whites”. This first wave ended in 1999, when a former member of the BNP and National Socialist Movement, David Copeland, the “London nail-bomber”, launched a two-week bombing campaign in London that was largely directed toward homosexuals and minorities, and which killed three people and injured over 130.

In the same year as the “London nail-bomber”, the election of a new BNP Chairman and a strategic shift sparked the second wave of right-wing extremist activity, which was anchored in a more serious investment in elections and a vote-based strategy.<sup>2</sup> Importantly, this is not to state that right-wing violence did not remain salient. From 2001 onwards, at least 15 individuals with links to extreme right groups or ideas were imprisoned on terrorism-related offences. Some illustrative examples include: Martyn Gilleard, who was found with homemade bombs,



weapons, instructions on how to use poison and Nazi memorabilia, which appeared to stem from his desire to “save” Britain from “multi-racial peril”; Neil Lewington who was arrested in possession of explosives and linked to the white supremacist websites of Combat 18 and the Ku Klux Klan; and former BNP candidate Robert Cottage, who was arrested after stockpiling weapons, and made clear his belief that “uncontrolled immigration would lead to a civil war that was largely imminent and inevitable”.<sup>3</sup>

Another example was the **Racial Volunteer Force (RVF)**, which was formed in 2002 as a “global Aryan conservation group” and with the stated aim of establishing “a United Racial Movement polarising the White Race around a racial core for its own survival, protection, expansion and advancement”. Adhering to white supremacy, the group claimed it wanted to ‘unify the different pro-White groups and organisations within the Aryan movement’, and was organised along the basis of individual cells rather than under a leader (the so-called “leaderless resistance” model).<sup>4</sup> The potential for violence was underscored when, in 2005, several RVF members were imprisoned after stockpiling weapons and literature that provided guidance on how to prepare and use explosives. The group had also praised the London nail-bomber, David Copeland, and its members subscribed to the “14 words” that hold greatest resonance within the European and North American white supremacist movement: “We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children”.<sup>5</sup> It has since been claimed by monitoring groups that the RVF continues to have links with the NF and groups such as the British People’s Party (BPP) and British Freedom Fighters (BFF).

Despite these cases, the second wave saw the BNP emerge as a significant movement in British electoral politics, and attract unprecedented levels of media and public interest. The period of electoral growth commenced at the general election in 2001, when the BNP leader polled over 16 per cent in the northern area of Oldham, and following urban disturbances between white and Asian communities. Thereafter, the BNP sought to downplay accusations of racism, criminality and violence, while in some areas developing relatively intensive local campaigns. At the next general election in 2005, the extreme right rallied almost 200,000 voters, and at each set of local elections that were held over the years 2006-2008 the party mobilised over 200,000 votes. Despite strong media interest in the BNP’s links to violence – that were variously reflected in the actions of its candidates and members - the party established a significant presence in public office, including over 50 local councillors, one seat on the Greater London Assembly in 2008 and, the next year, two Members of the European Parliament (when over 808,000 citizens voted for the extreme right). As in earlier decades, during this second wave there was a clear geographical pattern to electoral and membership support for the extreme right. Analyses of BNP voting found that support was concentrated most strongly in northern England (particularly Pennine Lancashire and also West Yorkshire), the Midlands, and some areas of outer London. The areas that provided disproportionately high levels of support also shared several features: they were urban, had low average education levels and large communities of Muslims of Pakistani and/or Bangladeshi heritage.<sup>6</sup> There was also evidence that support was strongest within mainly white local wards that were nested within more diverse authorities.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, research on more strongly committed members revealed that



they tended to be based in particular regions of the country, with particularly large clusters being found in areas of Lancashire (such as Burnley and Pendle), East Midlands (such as Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire) and, to a lesser extent, outer-London districts such as Epping Forest.<sup>8</sup>

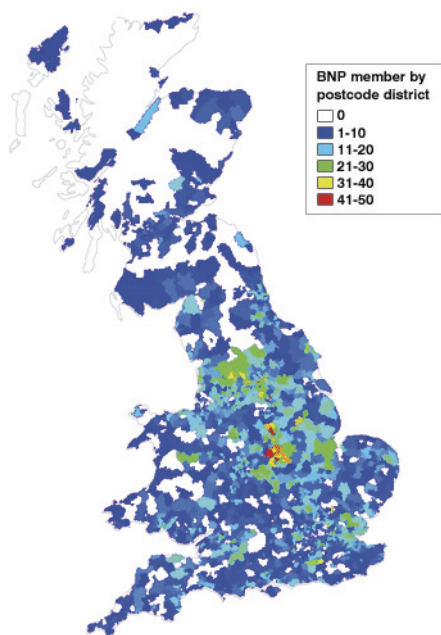
The BNP, however, proved unable to sustain its electoral growth. At the general election in 2010, the party increased its number of votes to over 564,000 but proved unable to break through in its two target seats of Barking (in outer London), and Stoke Central (in the West Midlands). Locally the party also lost 28 councillors, and its electoral decline was confirmed by results at subsequent local elections in 2011 and 2012. More generally, membership of the main extreme right party slumped from a peak of over 14,000 in 2009, to around 2,000 in 2012.<sup>9</sup> Outside of elections, the impact of this decline was to fuel further

factionalism and fragmentation within the BNP leadership of being financially corrupt and politically incompetent. Following a failed leadership challenge, numerous influential organisers began exiting the party, either leaving politics, joining rival groups or forming new movements.

As part of this broader process of fragmentation, the most significant organisation to emerge was the **English Defence League (EDL)**, which was formed in June 2009 and in response to a protest by radical Islamists against British troops in the southern town of Luton, in Bedfordshire. The arrival of the EDL, and the return of the BNP to its traditional street-based demonstrations, has marked the onset of a third wave of right-wing extremist activity that has generally been more chaotic, fragmented and less predictable than the second wave. Collectively this wave is focusing more effort on non-electoral and more provocative forms of campaigning, such as protesting against allegations of child exploitation by “Muslim gangs”, and appears less interested in contesting elections or engaging in the conventional political process.

At least initially, the EDL framed itself as a single-issue movement that was opposed to radical, violent Islamism, and distanced itself from the toxic racism and neo-Nazism of the “old” extreme right. In its own words, the EDL pledged “to protect the inalienable rights of all people to protest against radical Islam’s encroachment into the lives of non-Muslims”, and “the creeping Islamisation of our country”. The movement claimed links to members of Jewish and Sikh communities, and claimed to attract support “from people of all races, all faiths, all political persuasions, and all lifestyle choices”. There

Figure 1: Geographical distribution of Extreme Right Members (2007)



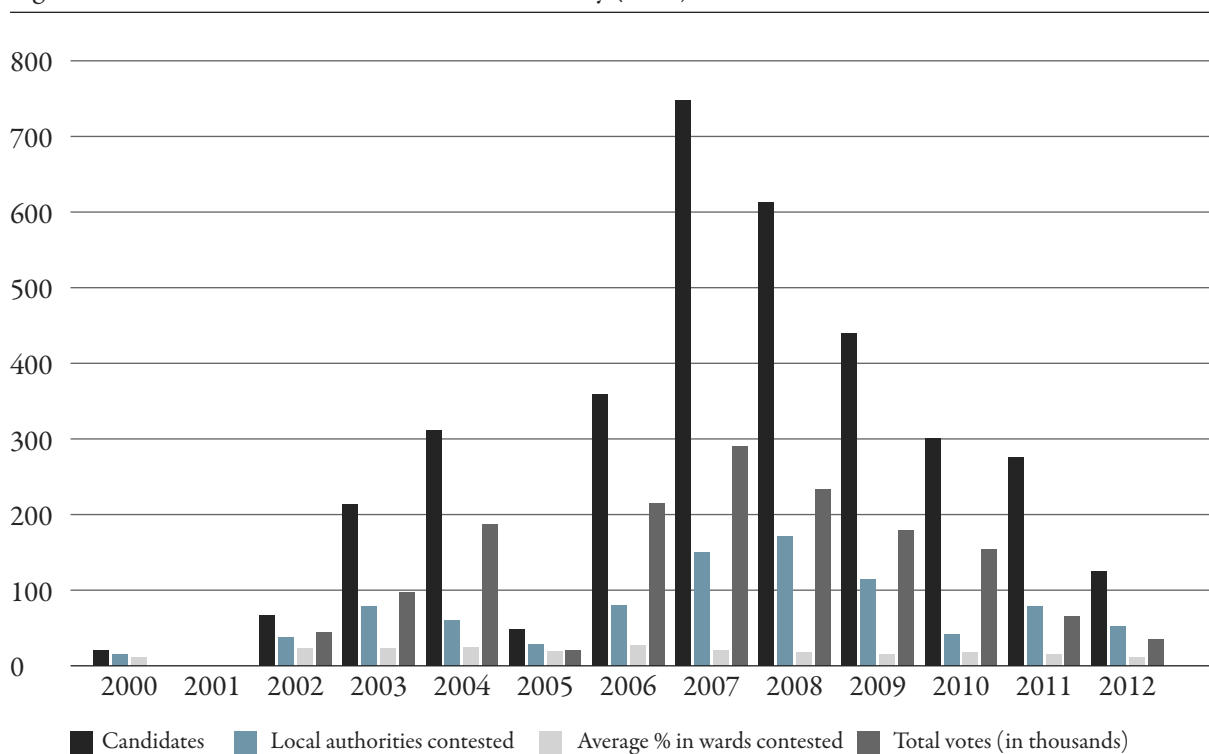


also emerged Scottish and Welsh Defence Leagues, while the EDL leadership sought to cultivate links with “counter-Jihad” groups in other areas, though notably Scandinavia and the United States.

Aside from the EDL the chaotic, fragmented and unpredictable nature of the third wave is also reflected in the emergence of an array of alternative organisations, most of which were formed in response to personality rather than ideological disputes. In recent years these have included the England First Party (EFP), a lingering rump of the NF, British Freedom, Britain First, British Freedom Fighters (BFF), English Democrats (ED), Democratic Nationalists (DN), Aryan Strike Force (ASF), English Volunteer Force (EVF), Combined ex-Forces (CxF), Infidels, November 9 Society (N9S) and Combat 18 (C18). Some of these groups have attracted media interest, but it is extremely difficult to obtain an accurate picture of their

internal functioning. It appears that most of these formations lack significant financial resources, and virtually all remain without significant public support. There is also considerable variation in terms of their adopted strategy. Whereas more established parties like the BNP continue to view electoral politics as a “route to power”, groups such as the EDL, Infidels and CxF have put stronger emphasis on “direct action” and street-based provocation. Still others such as Britain First have followed a campaigning model of activism, seeking to increase the salience of issues like child exploitation (which is often linked directly by the extreme right to Islam, and Muslims) through e-mailing and virtual campaigns. This increasingly fragmented scene also hosts several evolving alliances. At recent demonstrations, for example, the BNP has campaigned alongside the Infidels and CxF, while the remaining rump of the NF has engaged in activities with the Casuals, a football hooligan firm.

Figure 2: The rise and fall of the British National Party (BNP) in local elections, 2000-2012





## The evidence base: What do we know?

In recent years the evidence base on public support for right-wing extremism has been strengthened by a series of innovative studies. While these tend to focus on electoral support, they shed light on the profile and attitudes of extreme right supporters, as well as a wider circle of citizens who might not support these groups but remain broadly receptive to right-wing extremist ideas. This section summarises this evidence on (a) extreme right-wing voters, more strongly committed (b) members and activists, and then (c) public support for the English Defence League, and attitudes toward violence within the extreme right. In terms of the first, research shows that supporters of the extreme right tend to be middle-aged or elderly men from the working classes, who tend to be in employment, have very few or no educational qualifications, are deeply pessimistic about their finances and tend to read newspapers that are hostile toward immigration and minorities. This picture is generally consistent with evidence elsewhere in Europe, which has shown repeatedly how supporters of the extreme right tend to share a similar and distinct social profile and – rather than political protesters – are concerned about a specific cluster of issues. In the UK, this support has been especially strong among the economically precarious skilled workers (often described as the ‘C2’ voters), and among citizens who are concerned predominantly over immigration. While supporters of the extreme right in the UK are more dissatisfied than average with mainstream leaders, and are also slightly more distrustful than the average citizen of political institutions, the core driver of their electoral support for the extreme right is their hostility toward

immigrants and minority ethnic groups.<sup>10</sup> At the 2009 European elections, for example, support for the BNP was traced to older, working-class men who were primarily concerned about immigration and were also more likely than average to endorse crude expressions of traditional racism.<sup>11</sup>

In terms of the second group of supporters – activists and members – studies show how these supporters tend to congregate in particular types of areas. One study suggests that extreme right party membership is most likely in cities that have a large proportion of non-whites, but only where there are also higher than average levels of residential segregation, suggesting that a lack of interaction and contact between different communities may be an important factor. Furthermore, rather than being associated with immigration per se, this study provides further evidence that it is the presence of Muslim communities of South Asian heritage that is particularly important to explaining stronger support for the extreme right.<sup>12</sup> Drawing on the same (leaked) BNP membership list, another study suggests that membership is most likely in urban areas, which suffer from disproportionately high rates of economic deprivation, where average levels of education are low, and there is a longer tradition of campaigning by right-wing extremist groups.<sup>13</sup> Such studies are useful in profiling the types of areas that tend to host extreme right-wing members, but they tell us little about individual motives for joining. In this respect, a more detailed qualitative study drew upon extensive “life-history” interviews with activists to explore the motivation for joining, becoming active in, and remaining within the BNP.<sup>214</sup> The findings from this study were broadly consistent with a larger research project on extreme right-wing activists across five European



states, and which traced the core motive for joining to a feeling that immigration and rising ethnic diversity were threatening the wider collective native group.<sup>15</sup> Significantly, the importance of perceived economic or cultural **threats** is also highlighted in the wider literature on explaining public hostility toward immigration, asylum-seekers and rising diversity, and there appears a consensus that perceived threat is integral to explaining prejudiced reactions to minorities.<sup>16</sup>

At the same time, however, qualitative research also points to the importance of looking beyond the initial motive for membership, toward how activists absorb from their surrounding movements a broader set of “motivational vocabularies” that inspire and sustain active commitment. Drawing on earlier research on social movements, this research suggests that right-wing extremist groups cultivate specific vocabularies among their supporters that build upon and amplify their initial grievances and feelings of threat. These vocabularies sustain active commitment to a form of politics that often entails personal and professional costs. The qualitative study by Goodwin suggests that these vocabularies are essentially four-fold: a vocabulary of **survivalism** that links the perceived threats from immigration (which otherwise were often focused on the local community) into a far grander struggle for racial and cultural survival, and one that is wrapped in apocalyptic themes, such as the “clash of civilizations”, or the anticipated balkanization of Britain; a vocabulary of **urgency** that aims to inspire active involvement by claiming that only urgent and radical action can ‘save’ the wider, collective group from threats; a vocabulary of **resistance**, which wraps this action in symbolic, nativist and often militaristic themes, such as the “spirit of the Blitz”, the Crusades

and earlier waves of resistance to ‘invaders’; and, lastly, a vocabulary of **legacy**, which underscores the moral obligation to take action by framing this as an attempt to “save” future generations – often the children and grandchildren of activists - from the impending and urgent threats.<sup>17</sup>

In contrast to the two areas above, the third area – support for the English Defence League and attitudes within the extreme right toward violence – remains under-researched and poorly understood. At the European level, there appears a general consensus that the ‘threat’ of right-wing extremist violence is relatively minor when compared to other forms of violent extremism, such as violent Islamism and separatism.<sup>18</sup> The relative weakness of right-wing extremist violence has been attributed by agencies like Europol to a combination of poor internal cohesion, low coordination, a lack of public support, and effective law enforcement. Broadly speaking this view is reflected in the UK where, although agencies have warned against dismissing the security threat from right-wing extremists, the bulk of attention has remained fixed on violent Islamism and a possible resurgence of violent dissident republicanism. But that said, there remains a distinct lack of reliable research on right-wing extremist violence, non-electoral groups like the EDL and the drivers of racially and/or religiously motivated crimes more generally. Recent data suggest that, since 2006, the number of hate crimes referred to the Crown Prosecution Service has steadily increased from 14,133 to 15,519, while the proportion of cases charged has also risen, from 59 to 72 per cent. Meanwhile, the number of convictions for racist and religious hate crime increased from 10,398 in 2007 to 11,038 in 2011.<sup>19</sup> While this might suggest



improvements to the monitoring and prosecution of hate crime within the UK, the reality appears to be that the underlying drivers of these crimes and any possible links to right-wing extremist groups or ideologies remain seriously under-researched.

There are, however, two examples of more detailed research on supporters of non-electoral groups. One is an online survey of Facebook sympathisers of the EDL, the results of which challenge the popular assumption that the movement is simply a bastion of young, poorly-educated men who are hostile toward liberal democracy. Instead, those who are most receptive to the EDL tend to be older, better educated and more supportive of democratic values than is commonly assumed. More broadly, sympathisers tended to be men, were more likely than average to experience unemployment, lacked confidence in the legal and justice system, were pessimistic about their future prospects and – with the EDL not contesting elections – tended to view the BNP as their preferred party. The survey also undermined the assumption that these “new” and non-electoral groups have rallied citizens who are overwhelmingly, or even solely, concerned about the perceived threat from Islam. Rather, these citizens appeared to be more concerned over the issue of immigration more generally.<sup>20</sup> The only other reliable study of the EDL was carried out by the Extremis Project and YouGov, who surveyed more than 500 citizens who self-identified with the group.<sup>21</sup> Those who were most likely to consider joining exhibited the same profile as supporters of the extreme right more generally: they tended to be men, were middle-aged or elderly and were skilled, semi- or unskilled workers. However, it is also clear that large majorities perceive the EDL as a toxic and race-based group: among those who were aware of the group and what it stands for, 85 per cent

said they would never consider joining, and 74 per cent perceived the EDL as a racist organisation. The nationally representative sample also suggested that while 69 per cent of the population do not agree with either the values or the methods of the EDL, 23 per cent are receptive to the values but not the methods, and only a very small minority of 6 per cent agree with both the group’s values and methods (the remainder said they did not know).

Beyond individual groups, what are the attitudes of extreme right supporters toward violence and conflict? While organisations like the NF, BNP and EDL are not openly violent, or even explicitly “pro-violence”, there is clear evidence that they attract citizens who are more likely than average to perceive violence and conflict between groups as justifiable and necessary. One survey of self-identified supporters of the extreme right BNP found that they were more likely than supporters of the more “respectable” radical right wing to consider preparing for group conflict and engaging in armed conflict as justifiable actions: 35 per cent of BNP supporters strongly agreed that “violence may be needed to protect my group from threats”, compared to 10 per cent of UKIP supporters; 22 per cent of BNP supporters considered “preparing for inter-group conflict” as always justifiable, compared to 8 per cent of UKIP supporters; and 12 per cent of BNP supporters considered ‘armed conflict’ as always justifiable, compared to 3 per cent of UKIP supporters. Right-wing extremists also appear distinctly more likely than those in the radical right to expect a future outbreak of violence: 60 per cent of BNP supporters strongly agreed with the statement that “violence between different ethnic, racial or religious groups is largely inevitable”, compared to 30 per cent of the supporters of UKIP.<sup>22</sup> Examining the relationship



between such views and the internal culture of right-wing extremist groups is a key challenge for researchers and policy-makers.

In summary, therefore, the UK has experienced three distinct waves of right-wing extremist activity in the post-war period that – while broadly consistent in terms of the underlying ideas - have followed various strategies in pursuit of support and power. Though the issue of right-wing extremist violence has not been as salient within the UK context as in other European states such as Germany, a lack of research within this area, the unpredictability and fragmentation of the current third wave and the continuation of a favourable public opinion climate for right-wing extremism are all factors that warrant the attention of policy and security communities going forward. There appears an emerging view within the collective extreme right that electoral strategies may not offer opportunities for growth, and that more provocative “direct action” approaches should be favoured. It is within this context that researchers, policy-makers and the security agencies should work collectively to strengthen and share the evidence base on right-wing extremism within the UK.



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